

ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

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A DAY'S RIDE: A LIFE'S ROMANCE.

CHAPTER XV.

On entering the drawing-room, his excellency presented me to an elderly lady, very thin, and very wrinkled, who received me with a cold dignity, and then went on with her crochet-work. I could not catch her name, nor, indeed, was I thinking of it; my whole mind was bent upon the question, Who could she be? For what object was she there? All my terrible doubts of the morning now rushed forcibly back to my memory, and I felt that never had I detested a human being with the hate I experienced for her. The pretentious stiffness of her manner, the haughty self-possession she wore, were positive outrages; and, as I looked at her, I felt myself muttering, "Don't imagine that your heavy black *moiré*, or your rich falls of lace, impose upon me. Never fancy that this mock austerity deceives one who reads human nature as he reads large print. I know, and I abhor you, old woman! That a man should be to the other sex as a wolf to the fold, the sad experience of daily life too often teaches; but that a woman should be false to woman, that all the gentle instincts we love to think feminine should be debased to treachery and degraded into snares for betrayal, this is an offence that cries aloud to Heaven!

"No more tea—none!" cried I, with an energy, that nearly made the footman let the tray fall, and so far startled the old lady, that she dropped her knitting, with a faint cry. As for his excellency, he had covered his face with the Globe, and I believe was fast asleep.

I looked about for my hat to take my leave, when a sudden thought struck me. "I will stay. I will sit down beside this old creature, and, for once at least in her miserable life, she shall hear from the lips of a man a language that is not that of the debauchee. Who knows what effect one honest word of a true-hearted man may not work? I will try, at all events," said I, and approached her. She did not, as I expected, make room for me on the sofa beside her, and I was therefore obliged to take a chair in front. This was so far awkward that it looked formal; it gave somewhat the character of accusation to my position, and I decided to obviate the difficulty by assuming a light, easy, cheerful manner at first, as though I suspected nothing.

"It's a pleasant little capital, this Kalbratenstadt," said I, as I lay back in my chair.

"Is it?" said she, dryly, without looking up from her work.

"Well, I mean," said I, "it seems to have its reasonable share of resources. They have their theatre, and their music garden, and their promenades, and their drives to—to—"

"You'll find all the names set down there," said she, handing me a copy of Murray's Handbook that lay beside her.

"I care less for names than facts, madam," said I, angrily, for her retort had stung me, and routed all my previous intention of a smooth approach to the fortress. "I am one of those unfashionable people who never think the better of vice because it wears French gloves, and goes perfumed with *Ess bouquet*."

She took off her spectacles, wiped them, looked at me, and went on with her work without speaking.

"If I appear abrupt, madam," said I, "in this opening, it is because the opportunity I now enjoy may never occur again, and may be of the briefest even now. We meet by what many would call an accident—one of those incidents which the thoughtless call chance directed my steps to this place; let me hope that that which seemed a hazard may bear all the fruits of maturest combination, and that the weak words of one frail, even as yourself, may not be heard by you in vain. Let me therefore ask you one question—only one—and give me an honest answer to it."

"You are a very singular person," said she, "and seem to have strangely forgotten the very simple circumstance that we meet for the first time now."

"I know it, I feel it; and that it may also be for the last and only time is my reason for this appeal to you. There are persons who, seeing you here, would treat you with a mock deference, address you with a counterfeit respect, and go their ways; who would say to their selfish hearts, 'It is no concern of mine, why should it trouble me?' But I am not one of these. I carry a conscience in my breast; a conscience that holds its daily court, and will even to-morrow ask me, 'Have you been truthful, have you been faithful? When the occasion served to warn a fellow-creature of the shoal before him, did you cry out, "Take soundings! you are in shallow water?" or, "Did you with slippery phrases gloss over

the peril, because it involved no danger to yourself?"

"Would that same conscience be kind enough to suggest that your present conduct is an impertinence, sir?"

"So it might, madam; just as the pilot is impertinent when he cries out 'Hard, port! breakers ahead!'"

"I am therefore to infer, sir," said she, with a calm dignity, "that my approach to a secret danger—of which I can have no knowledge—is a sufficient excuse for the employment of language on your part that, under a less urgent plea, had been offensive?"

"You are," said I, boldly.

"Speak out, then, sir, and declare what it is."

"Nay, madam, if the warning find no echo within, my words are useless. I have said I would ask you a question."

"Well, sir, do so."

"Will you answer it frankly? Will you give it all the weight and influence it should bear, and reply to it with that truthful spirit that conceals nothing?"

"What is your question, sir? You had better be speedy with it, for I don't much trust to my continued patience."

I arose at this, and, passing behind the back of my chair, leaned my arms on the upper rail, so as to confront her directly; and then, in the voice of an accusing angel, I said, "Old woman, do you know where you are going?"

"I protest, sir," said she, rising, with an indignation I shall not forget—"I protest, sir, you make me actually doubt if I know where I am!"

"Then let me tell you, madam," said I, with the voice of one determined to strike terror into her heart—"let me tell you; and may my words have the power to awaken you, even now, to the dreadful consequences of what you are about!"

"Shalley! Shalley!" cried she, in amazement, "is this gentleman deranged, or is it but the passing effect of your conviviality?" And with this she swept out of the room, leaving me there alone, for I now perceived—what seemed also to have escaped her—that the minister had slipped quietly away some time before, and was doubtless at that same moment in the profoundest of slumbers.

I took my departure at once. There were no leave-takings to delay me, and I left the house in a mood little according with the spirit of one who had partaken of its hospitalities. I am constrained to admit I was the very reverse of satisfied with myself. It was cowardly and mean of me to wreak my anger on that old woman, and not upon him who was the really great offender. He it was I should have arraigned; and with the employment of a little artifice and some tact, how terrible I might have made even my jesting levity! how sarcastic my sneers at fashionable vice! Affecting utter ignorance about his life and habits, I could have incidentally thrown out little episodes of all the men who have wrecked their fortunes by aban-

doned habits. I would have pointed to this man who made a brilliant opening in the House, and that who had acquired such celebrity at the Bar; I would have shown the rising statesman tarnished, the future chief justice disqualified; I would have said, "Let no man, however modest his station or unfrequented his locality, imagine that the world takes no note of his conduct; in every class he is judged by his peers, and you and I, Doubleton, will as assuredly be arraigned before the bar of society as the pickpocket will be charged before the beak!"

I continued to revolve these and such-like thoughts throughout the entire night. The wine I had drunk fevered and excited me, and added to that disturbed state which my own self-accusings provoked. Doubts, too, flitted across my mind whether I ought not to have maintained a perfect silence towards the others, and reserved all my eloquence for the poor girl herself. I imagined myself taking her hand between both mine, while, with averted head, she sobbed as if her heart would break, and, saying, "Be comforted, poor stricken deer! be comforted; I know all. One, who is far from perfect himself, sorrows with and compassionates you; he will be your friend, your adviser, your protector. I will restore you to that home you quitted in innocence. I will bring you back to that honeysuckle porch where your pure heart expanded in home affections." Nothing shall equal the refined delicacy of my manner; that mingled reserve and kindness—a sort of cross between a half-brother and a canon of St. Paul's—shall win her over to repentance, and then to peace. How I fancied myself at intervals of time visiting that cottage, going, as the gardener watches some cherished plant, to gaze on the growing strength I had nurtured, and enjoy the luxury of seeing the once drooping flower expanding into fresh loveliness and perfume. "Yes, Potts, this would form one of those episodes you have so often longed to realise." And then I went on to fancy a long heroic struggle between my love and that sentiment of respect for worldly opinion which is dear to every man, the years of conflict wearing me down in health but exalting me immensely in every moral consideration. Let the hour of crowning victory at last come, I should take her to my bosom, and say, "There is rest for thee here!"

"His excellency begs that you will call at the legation as early as you can this morning," said a waiter, entering with the breakfast tray; and I now perceived that I had never gone to bed, or closed my eyes during the night.

"How did this message come?" I asked.

"By the chasseur of his excellency."

"And how addressed?"

"To the gentleman who dined yesterday at the legation."

I asked these questions to ascertain how far he persisted in the impertinence of giving me a name that was not mine, and I was glad to find that on this occasion no transgression had occurred.

I hesitated considerably about going to him.

Was I to accept that slippery morality that says, "I see no more than I please in the man I dine with," or was I to go boldly on and denounce this offender to himself? What if he were to say, "Potts, let us play fair! put your own cards on the table, and let us see are you always on the square? Who is your father? how does he live? Why have you left home, and how? What of that horse you have——"

"No, no, not stolen—on my honour, not stolen!"

"Well, ain't it ugly? Isn't the story one that any relating might, without even a spice of malevolence, make marvellously disagreeable? Is the tale such as you'd wish to herald you into any society you desired to mix with?" It was in this high, easy, and truly companionable style that conscience kept me company while I ate two eggs and a plate of buttered toast. "After all," thought I, "might it not prove a great mistake not to wait on him? How if, in our talk over politics last night, I may have dropped some remarkable expression, a keen appreciation of some statesman, an extraordinary prediction of some coming crisis? Maybe it is to question me more fully about my 'views' of the state of Europe." Now, I am rather given to "views of the state of Europe." I like that game of patience, formed by shuffling up all the governments of the Continent, and then seeing who is to have the most "tricks," who's to win all the kings, and who the knaves. "Yes," thought I, "this is what he is at. These diplomatic people are consummately clever at pumping; their great skill consists in extracting information from others and adapting it to their own uses. Their social position confers the great advantage of intercourse with whatever is remarkable for station, influence, and ability; and I think I hear his excellency muttering to himself, 'Remarkable man, that—large views—great reach of thought—wish I could see more of him; must try what polite attentions may accomplish.' Well," said I, with a half sigh, "it is the old story, *Sic vos non vobis*; and I suppose it is one of the curses on Irishmen that, from Edmund Burke to Potts, they should be doomed to cram others. I will go. What signifies it to me? I am none the poorer in dispensing my knowledge than is the nightingale in discoursing her sweet music to the night air, and flooding the groves with waves of melody: like her, I give of an affluence that never fails me." And so I set out for the legation.

As I walked along through the garden, a trimly-dressed French maid passed me, turned, and repassed, with a look that had a certain significance. "It was monsieur dined here yesterday?" said she, interrogatively; and as I smiled assent, she handed me a very small-sealed note, and disappeared.

It bore no address, but the word Mr. —; a strange, not very ceremonious direction. "But, poor girl," thought I, "she knows me not as Potts, but as Protector. I am not the individual, but the representative of that widespread benevolence that succours the weak and

consoles the afflicted. I wonder has she been touched by my devotion? has she imagined—oh, that she would!—that I have followed her hither, that I have sworn a vow to rescue and to save her? or is this note the cry of a sorrow-struck spirit, saying, 'Come to my aid ere I perish'?"

My fingers trembled as I broke the seal; I had to wipe a tear from my eye ere I could begin to read. My agitation was great, it was soon to be greater. The note contained very few words; they were these:

"SIR,—I have not communicated to my brother, Sir Shalley Doubleton, any circumstance of your unaccountable conduct yesterday evening. I hope that my reserve will be appreciated by you, and

"I am, your faithful servant,

"MARTHA KEATS."

I did not faint, but I sat down on the grass, sick and faint, and I felt the great drops of cold perspiration burst out over my forehead and temples. "So," muttered I, "the venerable person I have been lecturing is his excellency's own sister! My exhortations to a changed life have been addressed to a lady doubtless as rigid in morals as austere in manners." Though I could read none of the words I employed, I remembered but too well the lesson I intended to convey, and I shuddered with disgust at my own conduct. Many a time have I heard severest censure on the preacher who has from the pulpit scattered words of doubtful application to the sinners beneath; but here was I making a direct and most odious attack upon the life and habits of a lady of immaculate behaviour! Oh, it was too—too bad! A whole year of sackcloth and ashes would not be penance for such iniquity. How could she have forgiven it? what consummate charity enabled her to pardon an offence so gross and so gratuitous? Or is it that she foresaw consequences so grave, in the event of disclosure, that she dreaded to provoke them. What might not an angry brother, in such a case, be warranted in doing? Would the world call any vengeance exorbitant? I studied her last phrase over and over, "I hope my reserve will be appreciated by you." This may mean, 'I reserve the charge—I hold it over you as a bail bond for the future; diverge ever so little from the straight road, and I will say, 'Potts, stand forward and listen to your indictment.' She may have some terrible task in view for me, some perilous achievement which I cannot now refuse. This old woman may be to me as was the Old Man of the Sea to Sindbad. I may be fated to carry her for ever on my back, and the dread of her be a living nightmare to me. At such a price, existence has no value," said I, in despair. "Worse even than the bondage is the feeling that I am no longer, to my own heart, the great creature I love to think myself. Instead of Potts the generous, the high-spirited, the confiding, the self-denying, I am Potts the timorous, the terror-stricken, and the slave."

Out of my long and painful musings on the subject, I bethought me of a course to take. I would go to her and say:

"Listen to this parable: I remember once, when a member of a phrenological club, a stupid jest was played off upon the society by some one presenting us with the cast of a well-known murderer's skull, and asking for our interpretations of its development. We gave them with every care and deliberation; we pointed out the fatal protuberances of crime, and indicated the depressions, which showed the absence of all prudential restraints; we demonstrated all the evidences of badness that were there, and proved that, with such a head, a man must have thought killing no murder. The rejoinder to our politeness was a small box that arrived by the mail, labelled, 'The original of the cast forwarded on the 14th.' We opened it, and found a pumpkin! The foolish jester fancied that he had cast an indelible stain upon phrenology, quite forgetting the fact that his pumpkin had personated a skull which, had it ever existed, would have presented the characteristics we gave it." I would say, "Now, madam, make the application, and say, do you not rather commend than condemn? are you not more ready to applaud than upbraid me?"

Second thoughts rather deterred me from this plan; the figurative line is often dangerous with elderly people. It is just as likely she would mistake the whole force of my illustration, and bluntly say, "I'd beg to remark, sir, I am not a pumpkin!"

"No. I will not adventure on this path; there is no need that I should ever meet her again, or, if I should, we may meet as utter strangers." This resolve made, I arose boldly, and walked on towards the house.

His excellency, I learned, was at home, and had been for some time expecting me. I found him in his morning-room, in the same costume and same occupation as on the day before.

"There's the Times," said he, as I entered; "I shall be ready for you presently;" and worked away without lifting his head.

Affecting to read, I set myself to regard him with attention. Vast piles of papers lay around him on every side; the whole table, and even the floor at his feet, was littered with them. "Would," thought I—"would that these writers for the Radical press, these scurrilous penny-aliners who inveigh against a bloated and pampered aristocracy, could just witness the daily life of labour of one of these spoiled children of fortune. Here is this man, doubtless reared in ease and affluence, and see him how he toils away, from sundown to dawn, unravelling the schemes, tracing the wiles, and exposing the snares of these crafty foreigners. Hark! he is muttering over the subtle sentence he has just written: 'I am much grieved about Maria's little girl, but I hope she will escape being marked by the malady.'" A groan that broke from me here startled him, and he looked up:

"Ah! yes, by the way, I want you, Paynter."

"I am not Paynter, your excellency. My name is——"

"Of course, you have your own name, for your own peculiar set; but don't interrupt. I have a special service for you, and will put it in the 'extraordinaries.' I have taken a little villa on the Lake of Como for my sister, but from the pressure of political events I am not able to accompany her there. She is a very timid traveller, and cannot possibly go alone. You'll take charge of her, therefore, Paynter—there, don't be fussy—you'll take charge of her, and a young lady who is with her, and you'll see them housed and established there. I suppose she will prefer to travel slowly, some thirty miles or so a day, post-horses always, and strictly avoiding railroads; but you can talk it over together yourselves. There was a Bobus to have come out——"

"A Bobus!"

"I mean a doctor—I call every doctor, Bobus—but something has detained him, or, indeed, I believe he was drowned; at all events, he's not come, and you'll have to learn how to measure out ether, and drop morphine;—the "companion" will help you. And keep an account of your expenses, Paynter—your own expenses for F.O.—and don't let her fall sick at any out-of-the-way place, which she has rather a knack of doing; and, above all, don't telegraph on any account. Come and dine—six."

"If you will excuse me at dinner, I shall be obliged. I have a sort of half engagement."

"Come in about nine, then," said he, "for she'd like to talk over some matters. Look out for a carriage, too; I don't fancy giving mine if you can get another. One of those great roomy German things with a cabriolet front, if possible, for Miss—I forget her name—would prefer a place outside. Kramm, the landlord, can help you to search for one; and let it be dusted, and aired, and fumigated, and the drag examined, and the axles greased—in a word, have your brains about you, Paynter. Good-by." Exit as before.

OUR ROMAN INN.

OUR inn is eligibly situated; for it is barely ten doors down Conductor-street, and not so much as ten seconds' easy walking from Spanish Place. When the sun shines out brightly, from no district does it get its rays reflected back so cheerfully and with such abundant interest. The hum and hurly-burly of Saxon voices passing by, mounts to our windows, for we are in the heart of the English pale. The welcome familiar tones of Smith greeting Smith on the highway, is borne in to us and maketh the heart glad. The jocund cracking of whips and rolling of wheels let us know that Smith and company—wife, daughters, and general redundant offspring, red book in hand—are being borne by. Coming out from our scarlet chamber, upon the long balcony which is part of our domain—a feat I indulge in pretty often—I look up to the left, where is a bright snatch of Spanish Place, and

see the stone gentleman sitting noseless in his foot-bath, and spouting water briskly; behind him the operatic flight of steps and the crust-coloured church. I look down to the right, and take in the shining sweep of street, the jewelling bazars, and gaudy scarf shops, and cigar-and-salt temples, and Cuccioni's monster photographs hung out, and Achille Rey and his wares reduplicated over and over again, stretching off to "the Course" yonder. I look down below, leaning on the balcony rail, where my knee brushes the style and titles of Our Inn embroidered in golden characters, and see crowns of hats, of familiar British make, flitting by below; and am very speedily seen myself by the little impish begging woman, who is at me in an instant with her "Signoreemo! Signoreemo mio!" I look steadily before me and do reverent homage to Roman Gunter, whose palace beards me just opposite. Great is Diana of Ephesus! Great is he who sits enthroned yonder at the Vatican! but there is one yet greater than he: I see "Spillman aîné" looking at me in golden characters, and I say advisedly that Spillman aîné hath a broader influence than Pio. That inestimable cook (dinners at fixed prices, and evening parties supplied) is the true minister of the interior. My countrymen stand by him nobly. I am glad I derive a degree of moral support from being under the shadow of so great a man, and I shall speak of him by-and-by in a little detail.

But our great scarlet chamber and banquet-room, so heavy and gloomily aristocratic, you should see *that*, to appreciate our inn thoroughly. There is a dingy rubicund magnificence about it that almost depresses. The air seems charged with the fragrance of ghostly dinners, which it is consoling to know that princes and other persons of quality have dined of. Our chairs and furniture are of the heavy Robinson Crusoe model, and when you strain at an arm-chair, it sticks its limbs firmly into the carpet and will not move. Our sofas are fearful instruments of inconvenience, about as shallow as a ship's berth, their backs developing into sharp uneasy shoulders, which, by degrees, project you gradually on to the floor. But then our gold carvings are miracles of luxuriance and artful ramification; and our looking-glasses, not extensive but well-meaning, do their best; and our clocks which never go, and gigantic candelabra which are never lighted, show what we are capable of, on a great effort, when called on to put out our strength. Even about our door dispensation, there is something solemn and awe-striking; for it is not ordered with a single vulgar swinging leaf, but flies open magnificently with two folds; which, being contracted to about the dimensions of a cupboard convenience, you are, so to speak, necessitated to fling both open, and make a species of triumphant entry.

Host Fritz, the Teuton who directs this establishment, is a pearl of great price; he furnishes inexhaustible entertainment, and should really charge himself in the bill. He is impayable, as the French put it; being round

and pluffy, and hooped and braced, like a compact German keg, and I fear is but too surely marked out for an apoplectic embrace one of these days. I wonder do the shrieks of laughter, which his figure waked, still cling, commingled with the ghostly dinners, to the walls of the scarlet chamber? Was he not in an eternal fume; and as his guests thickened did he not play the overtasked brain, the overwrought tissues, on the verge of giving way? It is the cabinet minister, the financier, bowed down with too much mind-work. At such crises, when pressed with indignant protests against certain table short-comings, he tosses his arms wildly in the air, and seems to wave away the subject frantically, as who should say: "Beware, beware, incautious strangers! Harass not one already toppling on the precipice of insanity! Have a care! ye reck not the mischief ye may do." At times, he appeals to those better feelings, which somehow find a corner in the breasts of even aggrieved and outraged guests. "Have pity," he says, almost weeping; "see you not how I am hunted from post to pillar?" (expressed in corresponding Italic idiom). "Figaro quâ, Figaro là! Ces autres, these Druses and Maronites, who have no bowels—yes, *no bowels*!—may press me and hunt me as a hare; but *you, you!* That supply of peach-tart ran out before it came down to your turn. Granted. Those delicate little birds that madame relishes" (a smile for madame) "fell short. Granted. The wine is inferior—say perhaps acid. Granted. Well, *wait*; only wait, and you shall see!" And he waves his hand over his head with a flourish, which intimates that in the illimitable perspective are great things. We look at each other abashed; we feel that we have done a mean thing, an unhandsome thing. It was shabby thus harassing a great man with our petty gastronomic grievances. But the illimitable perspective never comes. At another season he is rampant, boisterous, drunken with success. The guests—and guests of quality, too—have been crowding in tumultuously, and the mercury has leaped from Stormy, and Much Rain, to Very Fair. He is triumphant and walks upon clouds. He is Inn-keeping Jove, and is gracious: a wave of his hand and all things shall be as you wish. Trouble yourselves not—what matters money, time, or toil? It shall be done. What, ho! within, there! I arrive in a gush of passengers, the rejected of many hostleries, and am led away to fourth-class steerage accommodation, somewhere indistinctly about the roof. Betimes in the morning I lodge indignant protest against this treatment, and find the glass very, very high indeed. He makes as though he would take me into his bosom: "Patience, only patience! *but*!"—and he lays his finger on my button with pressure, and looks round over his shoulders, as though the air were alive with conspirators—"but—there is yet a—lit-tle—chamber" (he breaks his sentence up into mysterious fragments)—"not ready now—but will be anon—a *gallant* little apartment—you understand?" (extra pressure on the but-

ton)—"unique, matchless, exquisite—a *gallant* apartment, in fact, that will just suit monsieur." What the mysterious winks and shrugs that accompanied this alluring prospect were meant to point at I cannot now determine, but I know they conveyed a sense flattering and self-appreciative. See how fine and exquisitely turned was the lurking compliment: a hint—the mere breath of a hint—that sweets were to the sweet, and that monsieur would be appropriate tenant to a "gallant apartment," dainty, airy, and tasteful. When, therefore, I find it out to be a poor thing, no more than bare walls, with the plain Robinson Crusoe furniture, the complacent unction has been laid so adroitly to the soul, that I rather chime in with the notion of its being a *gallant chamber* indeed.

I find that he looks at things in an eminently hostelic view, and measures most things by that standard. He takes no cognisance of the old stones, Circuses, Forums, Capitols, Pillars, and such-like, in their capacity of old stones; unless, as I suspect, he has a hazy dream of the Coliseum being one day turned to practical uses, in the shape of a Grand Hotel of All Nations. I believe he has but a poor esteem of cardinals, and even of the Vicar of Christ, such not living ordinarily at hotels, or otherwise benefiting the trade. I am sure he cannot see any bearing of religion upon tables d'hôte, and therefore thinks there can be nothing in it. Towards the latter days of Holy Week I hear a lady of the Roman Communion, meeting Host Fritz at the bottom of the stair, take him solemnly into council, and ask him touching the fasting ordinances. Of this special day was there to be abstinence from flesh meat? Covers have been laid for an overflux of guests, there is a grateful press of business, and dinner is fixed an hour later in consequence of the ceremonials. Host Fritz is therefore exalted (in the French sense), and is brimming over with enthusiasm and benevolence. "To be sure!" he exclaims; "at seven precisely it will be served—everything in profusion—fish and meat, meat and fish! Madame can satisfy herself with both." Alas! this was not madame's idea: "Was there permission for flesh meats?" "To be sure! there will be abundance of *everything*: there will be meat *and* fish." "But is it not a fast day?" "Well, madame will find plenty of fish *and* meat, thank God!" Host Fritz cannot by any means be brought to grasp the religious and canonical bearings of the question.

Towards six o'clock, when the tocsin clangs out furiously for the feast—a familiar pulling for the bare life at a rope, as in a church steeple—bedrooms yawn and give up their dead, and little folding-doors opening suddenly, the white men come bursting forth with their war-paint on. The air hurtles with rustling brushing silks as with the sound of wings. The current has set in fiercely towards the baked meats that furnish forth the tables. We flock tumultuously into the scarlet chamber below, and range ourselves in an orderly manner—after the manner of our tribe—on both sides of the table where the

war-feast is to be, eyeing our ivory-handled tomahawks with a cannibal love. Bovineham, Bullington, and Company, represent British beef and dignity, and will presently be awfully *lowing* out orders to scared waiters. They herd together by the true laws of their caste, and are terrible by combination. They talk together noisily, and their voices do not keep tune, though their knives keep time; their ladies sit near them, and perform prodigies with those instruments of table-cutlery. There is one tremendous Polypheme, who has to play Sisyphus each time he mounts the stairs, pushing a huge abdominal burden before him, and in whose cheeks mantle all the richer gravy juices; him certain free and familiar friends have held again at the font, and rechristened by the name of Ursa Major. There is no reason why his full style and titles should not be Daniel Lambert Shorthorn; but for all the practical purposes of life, that other familiarity answers with a delicious expressiveness. Such nomenclature is presently enlarged to other objects, as having a photographic power and brilliancy. There is the swarthy, black-haired, sparkling-eyed Spanish gentleman, who sits opposite me, and rolls those engines of his in a very awful manner. For aught we know, he may be Don Gusman Alvares di Toledo, Grandee and Knight, with a hat and feather and flowing cloak ready up-stairs in his mails; or, he may be a mere wine-traveller for an eminent house at Xeres; but it is more convenient surely to know him simply as the Hidalgo.

At our mess, promotion very properly goes by seniority, not by favour or purchase. The next in dinner rank gets the step always. Oldest inhabitant sits at the top, and it is a pleasing encouragement to think that, by a steady patience, and strict and unflinching attendance, *you* too may at length reach to that honourable elevation. There is a certain excitement in this closing up daily, to fill the gaps in the ranks, and this sure progress towards winning your Grade. Oldest inhabitants—a bride and her husband—linger on with a strange adhesiveness until the regiment has dwindled to a skeleton. These, one morning, are discovered to have passed away gently, and are seen no more. Nor must I pass by the sallow spade-faced gentleman, with the goatish tuft, who is Mr. Stang, of Noo Yerk, and the "States" generally; nor the bloodless, cream-laid lady whose voice jars on you acutely, and cuts you like a knife, and who is nasally *Mirress* Stang, also of the Transatlantic city; nor the urchin, cur, whelp—rebelliously unlikened—who kicks at the wretched Italian serving-men, and boldly "annexes" chickens entire; who bears away the fruits of the earth to upper chambers privily, and who is known as *Marster* Stang, of that ilk. Noque te silebo—nor must we pass thee by unsung, sweet rose of Sandy Hook, lovely Fanny Stang, between whose sad sapless cheeks, and startling waist, which would slip easily through a good-sized curtain-ring, there is but too intimate a connexion. There are many more elements of our company.

Trips in each day, the bright lady of the violet robe, whose rich black hair shines and eddies like a mountain brook; glide in, too, with an unflinching regularity, the cloud of black-robed sisters, with the single brother to divide among them, most moping and melancholy party. I relish a little at first, the amiable clergyman (Vicar of Crumpley-in-the-Drains), who has come out with a stern fixed purpose of doing the thing thoroughly, who has prepared himself by elaborate grounding (perhaps grinding) in the works of the fathers and of the late Edmund Gibbon, Esquire, in Montfaucon, Casanbon, Muratori, and the amusing speculations of Doctor Adam, author of the well-known Roman Antiquities. Conscientiously he does his work, making parochial visits to each object, as he does to the householders at home in Crumpley-in-the-Drains. At first I envy him his noble ardour; I feel a burning admiration for the man who can restore the Forum exactly as that noble miscellany stood in its first days. But when he plucks forth his rubicund text-book between the courses, and sends me across the table a dry cut of Murray along with a slice of delicate mountain mutton; and into that sweet fruit sauce which suits the wild flavour of the boar, infuses gritty figures as to the height of the Column of Trajan, with sly allusions to the Empress Faustina and Cecilia Metella, I begin to rise in outspoken protest against the man and his works and pomps—a feeling ere long nursed into bitter loathing and hostility. He becomes for me a positive Old Man of the Sea in the matter of antiquities. He bursts upon me, from ambuscades of classical details, nice speculation as to the site of the temple—was it of the winds? He balances for me, Nibbi and Vasi, competent authorities on stones, but leans rather to the Vicar of Crumpley-in-the-Drains. Junior old men of the sea, but still diverting, are the two long gaunt youths with stolid faces and windmill arms, sent to foreign parts to furnish their brains with such ideal upholstery as they can find, and come back, not monkeys, but Ourangs proper, who have seen the world. They return every day, bursting with what they have seen and heard, and discharge their impressions across the table, with uncouth signs and loud hee-haws, much as Caspar Hauser or other wild man would have done. At times, conversation rises into hurly-burly; and scraps of incongruous polyglot fly thick:

"Mr. Stang, sir! Mr. Stang, sir! *you* have seen the Capitol, sir?"

"Yes, sir; I were there too-day!"

"I ay-lude, sir, to the Capitol at Washin'ton—and——"

Undercurrent of vicar of Crumpley-in-the-Drains: "—Bones, removed by order of the Empress Helena, and placed in a marble sarcophagus adorned with sculptures, attributed to——"

"Oh, the Poe-ope!" (from the gaunt youths)
—"oh, yes, I saw the Poe-ope, and then we went down into the Ca-ta-co-o-o-mbs—oh, yes!"

Bullington (breaking in angrily): "The

arrangements, sir, were beastly—yes, sir, *beastly*. Where were the police? This rotten, degraded——"

Vicar of C-in-the-D. (very softly): "The whole of the right arm and a great portion of the left leg have been restored. This exquisite fragment was found, many——"

Elderly Frenchman, who has resided much in England: "Vis pleshar! I will be dere yesterday."

"Sir! the whole thing *must* blow up, for——"

"As Winckelman says, the ancients never made——"

"Vile soup——"

And then rushes in an overpowering Babel, wherein Cecilia Metella, Empress Faustina, Antoninus Pius, Cato the Censor, and Our Minister, jostle each other in unseemly confusion.

From a little gallery on the stair we may look down into the hall; and it is amusing of an evening, when the lamps are lighted, to lean on the rail and look down into the hall, and see the dramatic business that goes forward. Now, it is waitersdom clustered very thick, and discussing a point in their own social economy with much noise and vigorous action. Now, it is a great four-horse vetturino just come up from Naples, and being unloaded. Most picturesque vehicle, it was signalled long before it came in sight. Its jingling bells were heard afar off down the street; the loud sounding whip, and the "High! high!" of driver, and the screams of delighted urchins scampering on in front, all gave cheerful notice. I look down from the gallery and see the little piece played. Enter the dusty travellers, and defile past—father, wife, sisters, children, it may be; babies, perhaps; nurse, very likely; round whom dance expectant gnats and midges in the shape of fluttering waitersdom. Emerges presently, host Fritz, in character of Inn-keeping Jove, and anxious interview follows, as to rooms, accommodation, and so forth; waitering interest crowding round with one ear bent inwards with an eager attention. It is settled; cloud breaks, floats up stairs: and then blue-robed porters file by, bending under heavy trunks. Finally, enters picturesque postboy, in pale sky-blue jacket, and silver medallion embroidered on his right arm, and fanciful hat: and picturesque postboy has, presently, his hand out and is declaiming furiously, and stamping with his jackboots, and pointing to the quarter where the city of Naples may be supposed to lie, and looks contemptuously at the moneys tendered to him, asking, I suppose, in his own idiom, "Wot's this for? And *you* calls yourself a gen'lman!" &c. Courier, who is on the other side, is frightfully vehement, stamps too, clenches his hands, making as though he would spit in postboy's face; points also to the quarter of the horizon where Naples may be supposed to lie, and turns red with rage. I feel sure that stilettos will be drawn presently, and that the marble floor of host Fritz will trickle with blood. Astonishing that host Fritz, who is smoking his cigar tranquilly, and the waiting interest standing round

in a ring, do not interfere. In another second the courier's hand is raised quick as thought, and something glitters in it! Ah!—

It is only an extra piece of money, and the two opponents are embracing—they are smiling and laughing. The little drama is all in the interest of courier, whose master is looking on, and who thinks what a treasure of a fellow he has secured. The storm is lulled, and picturesque postboy goes on his way rejoicing.

BOUQUET FROM THE BALTIC.

IN the Germania of Tacitus, mention is made of a northern nation, called the *Æsthyi*, and in very early times the Southern and Western Germans, who were great travellers, gave the name *Æstier* or *Eistier* to the inhabitants of the eastern coast of the Baltic. It may be remarked that, in the history of Northern Europe, the Baltic plays a similar part to that of the Mediterranean in the South.

Not, however, till a comparatively recent date was it discovered that the name which had been loosely applied to several races, would be correctly limited to the inhabitants of that northern part of the eastern coast which now forms Revel and a portion of Livonia. The region, which is bounded on the north by the Gulf of Finland, on the west by the Baltic, and on the east by the river Nerova and Lake Peipus, has been the residence, from time immemorial, of a people of Finnish extraction, who are proud of their position as aborigines of their country, and thoroughly aware of the distinction between themselves and their neighbours. The Esthonian calls his country "*Meie Ma*" (*our land*), and himself "*Maa Mees*" (*man of the soil*), to avert the possibility of confusion on the subject.

Like most northern nations, the early Esthonians had a great respect for war, and were dexterous in the use of clubs, lances, slings, and short knives, as weapons of offence. Those who died in battle were honoured with a funeral pyre, and their ashes were deposited in ornamental urns. As for the profession of piracy, it was deemed rather estimable than otherwise.

Nevertheless, the Esthonians, though they shared the fighting propensities of their neighbours, were not an especially warlike people. While the legends of other Finnish races celebrate savage combats and ruthless victories, those of the Esthonians point to a peaceful, secluded state of existence as the perfection of felicity. The seat of all their legends is the eastern part of their country, near Lake Peipus and the river Embach, or as the natives call it, "*Emmajöggi*." This is the land of antiquity and wonder.

The origin of the river is itself the subject of a curious myth. Soon after the earth (which, as in other systems, is a flat disc) was created, and the broad heaven with its radiant sun and glittering stars arched over its surface, the animals began to disobey the commands of Old Father, the Supreme Being, and persecuted and

molested each other. Old Father summoned them all to his presence, and told them that he had originally formed them for peace, happiness, and freedom, but that he now found they required the government of a king, who would curb their evil propensities. The new monarch would arrive on the bank of a brook, which must be dug expressly for his reception, and sufficiently deep and broad to become the "*Emmajöggi*" (or Mother Brook) of smaller streams. The earth dug up in the formation of the brook was to stand as a tall mountain, which Old Father promised to crown with a wood, as the residence of the future king.

Obedient on this occasion to the commands of Old Father, most of the animals set about the performance of their task. The cock, by crowing, indicated the course which the stream was to take, and the fox, who followed him, marked it with his tail. The first furrow was drawn by the mole, the badger worked underground, the wolf scraped up the earth with his feet and snout, the bear carried it away, and even the birds contributed their assistance.

When Old Father inspected the diggings, he expressed himself highly satisfied with the labourers. By way of conferring an appropriate reward on each species of merit, he decreed that in commemoration of their dirty work, the bear and the mole should look dirty for the rest of their lives, and that the wolf should always have a black snout and feet in honour of his raking. Two of the animals fell into disgrace. One was the crab, whom Old Father missed from the industrious throng, much to his anger, as he thought that a creature so liberally provided with claws had no right to be lazy. The crab, on the other hand, having just crawled out of the mud, was much nettled at being overlooked, and profanely asked Old Father if he carried his eyes behind him. The punishment of this impertinence was the immediate transfer of the crab's own eyes to the uncomfortable position to which he had lightly referred. The other offender was a grey-plumed bird, called by the Germans the "*Stutzer*" (*fop*). This delinquent, instead of taking part in the work, hopped from bough to bough, sunning his fine feathers, and rejoicing in the music of his own song. To the reproof which he received from Old Father on account of his rebellious idleness, he pertly answered that he thought it would be highly discreditable to soil his beautiful plumage with such dirty work as digging. His punishment was manifold. His legs, which had previously been white, and which he had been unwilling to soil, became black; he was forbidden to quench his thirst with the water of the stream, and obliged to remain content with the drops that hung upon the leaves; he was prohibited from singing, save on the approach of a storm, when other creatures got out of the way.

The ends of justice thus answered, Old Father filled the new-dug bed with water, which he poured from a golden urn and animated with his breath.

A sort of Northern Apollo, who is named Wannemunna, and is, doubtless, the Wainämöinen of the Finns, is an important personage in Esthonian mythology. According to another legend of the Emmajõggi, the whole human race and all the animals were summoned to the mountain formed of the earth thrown up in the great digging, that they might be instructed by Wannemunna in the art of song. When they were all assembled, a rustling sound was heard in the air, and Wannemunna alighted on the hill-top, where he smoothed his ringlets, shook his garments, stroked his beard, cleared his voice, and executed on a stringed instrument a prelude, which was immediately followed by a song that delighted all hearers, and most of all the vocalist himself (a state of things by no means peculiar to Esthonia). The Emmajõggi stopped her course, the wind forgot to blow, the beasts and birds listened attentively: in fact, all the incidents that usually follow the performance of an Orpheus took place on this occasion. But most of the auditors were unable to take in the whole of what they heard. The trees only retained the rustling in the air which accompanied the musician's descent, and they imitate it with their leaves to this day. The Emmajõggi caught the rustling sound of his garment, and still repeats it in the rushing of her waters. The harshest notes of the music were retained by the winds. The singing-birds, especially the lark and the nightingale, mastered the prelude. In short, every creature caught something, save the fish, who carried their eyes, but not their ears, above the surface of the water, and thus merely saw the movement of the musician's lips, without hearing the sound of his voice. Hence, to the present day, they are dumb, though they move their mouths. Man alone could understand the whole of Wannemunna's song, as he sang of the vastness of the heavens, of the glory of the earth, of the pleasant banks of the Emmajõggi, and of the destinies of the human race. And so much was Wannemunna penetrated by the beauty of his own performance, that the tears he shed wetted six coats and seven shirts completely through. Thus, thoroughly watered, he ascended to the dwelling of Old Father, that he might regale him with his music and his song. Privileged ears may sometimes hear him even now, as he sings on high, and from time to time he sends his messages to earth, that man may not altogether lose the gift of song. And at some distant day he will come again to earth, and bestow happiness on Esthonia.

What a lovely story would this be were it not for the unlucky shirts and coats! But those who are accustomed to the legends of primitive races will not be startled by leaps from the sublime to the ridiculous.

Esthonia is not entirely destitute of heroic legends. The giant Kallewe Poeg is, to all intents and purposes, an Esthonian Hercules, immortalised by his feats of strength. As his name signifies, he was the son of Kallewe, an ancient deity, who was a mighty ruler in his

time, and who, when he was on his death-bed, told his wife that after his decease she would bring forth a son more strongly resembling his father than two others already in the world. He would not divide his dominions, but said, that when his youngest son had grown up, the right of succeeding to the paternal rule should be settled by lot. His disconsolate widow dug for him a grave with her own hands, and raised over it a heap of stones, on the coast near Revel.

The trial of skill that was to settle the question of succession to the dominions of Kallewe occurred on the borders of a lake near Dorpat. The three brothers took as many large stones of equal weight, and threw them in the order of their ages. The two elder were, of course, defeated by the youngest, and quietly departed, leaving him on his father's throne. A large block of granite, split by lightning, and about half as high again as an average man, is still shown in the vicinity of the lake as the stone flung by Kallewe Poeg.

When his land was threatened with an invasion, Kallewe Poeg walked through the great lake Peipus to fetch planks from the opposite side, and returned with twelve dozen, though he had been put to a considerable inconvenience by a rough-headed sorcerer, who had blown upon the waters till they were mountains high, and nearly reached his waist. As soon as he had recrossed, he fell asleep on a hill that is still known as the "Kallewe Poeg Säng" (bed of Kallewe Poeg); and while he was in this helpless condition, snoring so mightily that the neighbouring mountains groaned, his sword was stolen by his enemy, the sorcerer, who could only lift it by means of enchantment, and soon let it drop into a stream from which he could not recover it. This sword had been manufactured in Finland by the giant's uncle, who furnished a remarkable instance of the value of the number seven; for he occupied seven years in making the weapon out of seven sorts of iron, uttered seven magic spells during the process, and tempered it in seven waters. After a long search, it was found by Kallewe Poeg, who, however, left it in the stream, that it might be wielded by some future deliverer of his country, to whom it would reveal itself of its own accord. This extra task accomplished, Kallewe Poeg put his load of planks upon his shoulders, and when he had proceeded some distance, was assailed by three magicians, who pulled up several trees by the roots, and used them as clubs. The hero soon put them to flight, being greatly cheered by a voice which he heard in the forest. This belonged to the hedgehog, on whom Old Father had not bestowed a skin, but to whom, out of gratitude, Kallewe Poeg gave a piece of his rough cloak. When shortly afterwards he collected some sand in this cloak to make a couch, some of it fell through the hole produced by his gift to the hedgehog, and was sufficient to form a small mountain. After sundry other adventures he built for his residence a city on the sea-coast, and governed the country round. This was the origin of Revel.

While the stories about Kallewe Poeg are nearly as wild as the legends of the Tartars, to which in character they are somewhat similar, they are told with a great display of geographical accuracy. A high rocky coast in the neighbourhood of Revel was actually shown to Dr. Kruse (an antiquary to whose researches in Estonian tradition we are much indebted) as the sepulchre raised by the widow of Kallewe Poeg's father over her departed husband, and a lake in the vicinity is attributed to her tears. Near Assama, a town situated to the north-west of the Peipus, Dr. Fählmann, another archaeologist, was shown a marsh and four pits, the origin of which is thus explained: Kallewe Poeg, mounted on horseback, was giving chase to his foes, when his horse, in springing from one mountain-top to another, took too short a leap, and fell between them. The body of the animal, dashed to pieces, formed the marsh, and the four pits are the prints of his feet. An awful curse was uttered by Kallewe Poeg on the occasion of the accident. "Remain a marsh," he said to the fatal place, "a marsh till the end of the world, an abode for nothing but frogs. May man avoid thee and avert his face from thy hideous form." The exact spot on the bank of the river Aa is shown, where Kallewe Poeg had a remarkable encounter with three "iron-clad men." The first of these he whirled round his head, making a noise like the wings of a flying eagle, and then stamped him into the ground, so that he was buried up to his waist. The second was similarly whirled, with a sound like that of the wind among pine-trees, and buried up to the chin. As to the third, whose whirling could only be compared to a flash of lightning, he was stamped so deeply into the earth that only the point of his helmet was visible.

The angling of Kallewe Poeg in this same river Aa was on a most magnificent scale. An ambassador who came to demand his submission to a neighbouring power, was asked by him to fetch his staff, which was standing at the river-side, furnished with a bait for crabs. The staff proved to be the trunk of a tree, which the ambassador could not move, but which Kallewe Poeg pulled up with ease, showing a whole horse as the suspended bait. The ambassador was then sent home, with orders to report that the conquest of Kallewe Poeg would be no easy task.

The time when Kallewe Poeg flourished is regarded by the Estonian peasant as a sort of golden age. Dr. Kruse saw in a large stone, which lay near the Kallewe Poeg Säng, the marks of a colossal finger and thumb, and was told by a peasant who resided on the spot that these marks were left by Kallewe Poeg, a good worker of the land, under whose dominion corn was abundant, and flocks greatly multiplied. Indeed, the stone itself was a monument of his beneficent agency, for it had been flung by him at a wolf that was carrying off a lamb. Another relic is the Kallewe Poeg tool (chair), a huge stone, with an appearance of a back and two arms, upon which the giant is said to have rested.

So great a hero could not fall by any sword but his own. When he left his weapon in the stream, after it had been stolen by the enchanter, he uttered an imprecation to the effect, that if ever he who had worn it should cross that stream, he wished it might cut off his legs. By "him who had worn it," he meant the enchanter; forgetting for the moment that he had carried the sword himself. As General Damas says: "Curses are like young chickens; and aye come home to roost;" so when Kallewe Poeg amused himself one day by walking through the stream, his feet were so dreadfully cut by the sword that he with difficulty got out of the water, and flung himself in agony upon the ground, his groans filling the whole intermediate space between the earth and the abode of the gods. He died of his wounds, and his soul ascended to heaven, but Old Father was afraid lest such an active hero might become mischievous if he was not furnished with some employment adequate to his great powers. He was, therefore, despatched to the infernal regions, to keep order among the devils, who had been more than commonly contumacious.

We conclude our series with a charming fable which we have purposely reserved to the last, and we tell it literally as it was heard by Dr. Fählmann, when an old Estonian narrated it for the amusement of his grandchildren:

"Knowest thou the light in Old Father's halls? It has just sunk to rest, and where it went out its reflexion still shines in the sky, and already is there a bright streak which extends towards the east, whence in its full magnificence it will again greet the entire creation. Dost thou know the hand which receives the sun and brings her to rest when she has finished her course? Knowest thou the hand which re-kindles her when she is extinguished, and makes her once more begin her heavenly journey?"

"Old Father had two faithful servants of the race that is blessed with eternal youth, and when on the first evening light had finished its course, he said to Aemmerik: 'On account of thy faithfulness, daughter, I entrust to thee the sinking sun. Extinguish her, and conceal the fire, that it may cause no harm.' And when on the following morning the sun was to renew her course, he said to Koit: 'Thy office, my son, shall be to rekindle the light, and prepare it for its new journey.' Both performed this duty faithfully, and there was not a day on which the vault of heaven was without its light. When in winter the sun reaches the horizon, she is extinguished at an earlier hour, and in the morning she later resumes her course; but when in spring she awakes the flowers and the birds, and when in summer she ripens the fruit with her sultry beams, she is only allowed a short time of repose, and as soon as her light is extinguished Aemmerik places her immediately in the hands of Koit, who at once re-kindles her for new life.

"That beautiful time had arrived when flowers put forth their colours and their fragrance, and birds and men fill the air with songs, and Aem-

merik and Koit looked deeply into each other's brown eyes, and when the fading sun passed from her hand into his, their hands were pressed together and their lips met. But one eye that never slumbers had observed what took place in the still midnight, and Old Father said, 'I am well pleased with your performance of your duty, and desire that you should both be happy; so take one another, and hold your office as man and wife.'

"But both replied from one mouth: 'Father, mar not our joy. Let us always remain lovers, for we have found our happiness in wooing, and our love is now fresh and young.'

"And Old Father granted their prayer, and blessed their resolve. Only during four weeks in the year do they both meet at midnight, and then Aemmerik brings the extinguished sun to the hand of her lover, the pressure of the hand and the kiss follow, and Aemmerik's cheek glows, and its rosy red is reflected in the sky, until Koit has rekindled the light, and the golden radiance in the sky announces the approaching sunrise. And Old Father still honours the meeting by adorning the fields with the fairest flowers, and the nightingales in jest cry to Aemmerik, as she reposes on the bosom of Koit, 'Laisk tüduk, laisk tüduk! öpik!' (Tardy maiden, tardy maiden, night has lasted too long!)"

POOR MARGARET.

Poor Margaret's window is alight;

Poor Margaret sits alone;

Though long into the silent night,

And far the world is gone.

She lives in shadow till her blood

Grows blackened, soul and all;

Upon her head a mourning hood,

Upon her heart a pall.

The stars come nightly out of heaven

Old darkness to beguile;

For her there is no healing given

To their sweet spirit-smile.

That honey dew of sleep the skies

In blessed balm let fall,

Comes not to her poor tired eyes,

Though it be sent for all.

At some dead flower, with fragrance faint,

Her life opens like a book;

Some old sweet music makes its plaint,

And, from the grave's dim nook,

The buried bud of hopes laid low,

Flowers in the night full-blown;

And little things of long ago

Come back to her full-grown.

Her heart is wandering in a whirl,

And she must seek the tomb

Where lies her long-lost little girl.

Oh well with them for whom

Love's morning star comes round so fair

As evening star of faith,

Already up and shining, ere

The dark of coming death.

But Margaret cannot reach a hand

Beyond the dark of death;

Her spirit swoons in that high land

Where breathes no human breath:

She cannot look upon the grave

As one eternal shore,

From which a soul may take the wave

For heaven, to sail or soar.

Across that deep no sail unfurled

For her, no wings put forth;

She tries to reach the other world

By groping through the earth.

'Twas there the child went underground,

They parted in that place;

And ever since the mother found

The door shut in her face.

Though many effacing springs have wrapped

With green the dark grave-bed,

'Twas there the breaking heartstrings snapped,

As she let down her dead;

And there she gropes with wild heart yet,

For years, and years, and years;

Poor Margaret! and there she'll let

Her sorrows loose in tears.

All the young mother in her old voice

Its waking moan will make;

A young aurora light her eyes

With radiance gone to wreck!

And then at dawn she will return

To her old self again,

Eyes dim and dry, heart grey and dorn,

And querulous in her pain.

"We never loved each other much,

I and my poor good-man;

But on the child we lavish'd such

A love as overran

All boundaries, loving her the more

Because our love was pent;

Striving as two seas try to pour

Their strength through one small rent.

"For children come to still link hands,

When souls have fallen apart;

And hide the rift when either stands

At distance heart from heart.

So on our little one we'd look,

Press hands with fonder grasp,

As though we closed some holy book

Softly with golden clasp.

"And as the dark earth offers up

Her little winterling

The crocus, pleading with its cup

Of hoarded gold, to bring

Down all the grey heaven's golden shower

Of spring to warm the sod;

So did we lift the winsome flower

That sprang from our dark clod.

"Our little Golden-heart, her name,

And all things sweet and calm,

And pure and fragrant, round her came

With gifts of bloom and balm.

And there she grew, my queen of all,

Golden, and saintly white,

Just as at summer's smiling call

The lily stands alight.

"To knee or nipple grew the goal

Of her wee stately walk;

The voice of my own silent soul

Was her dear baby-talk.

Then darklingly she pined and failed.

And looking on our dead,

The father wailed awhile and ailed,

Turned to the wall and said:

"'Tis dark and still our house of life,

The fire is burning low,

Our pretty one is gone, and, wife,
 'Tis time for me to go:
 Our Golden-heart has gone to sleep,
 She's hopped in for the night;
 And so to bed I'll quietly creep,
 And sleep till morning light."

Once more poor Margaret arose,
 And passed into the night:
 Long shadows weird of tree and house
 Made ghosts i' the wan moonlight!
 She passed into the churchyard, where
 The many glad life-waves
 That leap'd of old, have stood still there,
 In green and grassy graves.

"Oh, would my body were at rest
 Under this cool grave sward!
 Oh, would my soul were with the blest,
 That slumber in the Lord!
 They sleep so sweetly underground,
 For death hath shut the door,
 And all the world of sorrow and sound
 Can trouble them no more."

A spirit feel is in the place,
 That makes the poor heart gasp;
 Her soul stands white up in her face
 For one warm human clasp!
 To-night she sees the grave astir,
 And, as in prayer she kneels,
 The mystery opens unto her:
 She for the first time feels

The spirit world may be as near
 Her, moving silent round,
 As are the dead that sleep a mere
 Short fathom underground.
 And there be eyes that see the sight
 Of lorn ones wandering, vexed
 Through some long, sad, and shadowy night
 Betwixt this world and next.

Doorways of fear are eye and ear,
 Through which the wonders go;
 And through the night with glow-worm light,
 The church is all aglow!
 There comes a waft of Sabbath hymn;
 She enters: all the air
 With faces fills, divine and dim,
 The blessed dead are there.

One came and bade poor Margaret sit,
 Seemed to her as it smiled,
 A great white bird of God alit
 From the marble forest wild.
 "Look to the altar!" there a spell
 Fixed her; she saw up start
 A woman, like a soul in hell:
 'Twas her own Golden-heart.

"It would have been *thus*, mother dear,
 And so God took her, from
 All trials and temptations here,
 To His eternal home;
 And you shall see her in a place
 Where death can never part."
 She looked up in that angel's face:
 'Twas her own Golden-heart.

The lofty music rose again
 From all those happy souls,
 Till all the windows thrilled, as when
 The organ thunder rolls;
 And all her life is like a light
 Weak weed the stream doth sway
 Until it reaches its full height,
 Breaks, and is borne away.

Her life stood still to listen to
 That music! then a hand
 Took hers, and she was floated through
 The mystic border-land.
 'Twas Golden-heart! from that eclipse
 She drew her into bliss:
 Two spirits closed at dying lips,
 In one immortal kiss.

Next day, an early worshipper
 Was kneeling in the aisle;
 A statue of life that did not stir,
 But knelt on with a smile
 Upon the face that smiled with light,
 As though, when left behind,
 It smiled on with some glorious sight,
 Long after the eyes were blind.

A BEAUTIFUL DEVIL.

ANGÉLIQUE TIQUET is the heroine of an old and prolix chronicle, from which is compiled the following true romance.

Her father, Jean Auguste Carlier, having some capital, entered into partnership with a rich old bookseller and jeweller of Metz, whose only child he subsequently married. The old man died soon after the marriage, bequeathing his whole property to his daughter and son-in-law, whose careful habits daily added to its bulk. Madame Carlier died eight years after marriage, leaving a daughter of seven (this Angélique), and a two-year old son, named Auguste. Carlier did not marry again, but lived for his children. He was a man of some learning, and when the shop was closed in the evening, employed himself in teaching his boy and girl, who both had quick abilities. Madame de Remonet, an aunt of the deceased Madame Carlier, had been one of the loveliest women of her time, and, although belonging to the bourgeoisie, had captivated the fancy of a youth of rank, who, in spite of the opposition of his friends, made her his wife, and obtained a post at court, where madame's beauty, wit, and talents for intrigue, forced her into favour. In those days, when Anne of Austria, in the pomp of her regency, was outraging decorum, the standard of public opinion in France demanded no high principle of conduct. Madame lived, therefore, a brilliant and heedless life until the sudden death of her husband left her with a pension far too small to supply the luxuries to which she was accustomed. Yet she made no visible change, except to become more reckless in her mode of life, till after a few more years, when the death or estrangement of some of her patrons, and a severe illness, which seemed all at once to anticipate the work of age, caused her to think of some certainty of a home for her declining years. Her relations in Metz had, of course, been neglected; but as she knew her brother and niece to be dead, and her nephew to be wealthy, she determined to proceed to Metz, and make herself, if possible, a fixture there. At Metz she was so amiable to her nephew-in-law, so motherly with the children, and seemed to be so happy in their company, that Carlier, whose comforts were the greater for her care of his household, offered her a home

with them. She accepted this offer with tears of gratitude, but as the quiet economy of the household by no means suited her taste, she soon endeavoured to introduce a radical change in all matters of expenditure. In this attempt, however, she did not succeed; for Carlier, though kind and gentle, was, in money matters, his own master. Yet he was blind to the real character of the woman whom he gave to his children as guide and companion; a woman selfish, rapacious, avaricious, utterly unprincipled, and heartless. Over the young mind of her niece she gained a complete ascendancy. Auguste was armed against her with simplicity of character, and him she hated, though she lavished upon him the tenderest endearments. After three years, finding her health restored, she resolved on a return to Paris. Imposing, therefore, upon Carlier with a specious tale that it was necessary for her to go to the capital to save her pension, she quitted Metz, but kept her hold upon the mind of Angélique. She induced him to give his daughter the advantages of Paris training; and she selected a convent of which the nuns were celebrated for proficiency in teaching. Thither Angélique was sent, and she spent all her holidays with her aunt. Carlier went often to Paris after his daughter's removal thither, and was grateful for the attention his aunt paid the girl. On one of these occasions, he allowed the acute lady to discover that his will was made, and that he had left his property, worth more than a million of livres, equally divided between son and daughter, with madame for their sole guardian. He dined with his aunt that evening, and half an hour afterwards left in the diligence for Metz. In three days he was dead.

He had never been a strong man, the time was mid-winter, the weather terribly severe. His death was ascribed to cold and fatigue, acting on an enfeebled constitution.

Madame de Remonet would seem to have had a presentiment of the impending catastrophe, for she had everything ready for a journey when the news arrived, and she set off to Metz, with Angélique, without an hour's delay. On their arrival, they found Carlier buried, and the passionate grief of Madame de Remonet attracted universal sympathy.

Angélique was now nearly sixteen, exquisitely beautiful, with hair marvellously long and abundant, so that, when let loose, it covered her, almost to her feet; its colour was a dark brown with gleams of light on it, as if sprinkled with gold-dust. So lovely a beauty Madame de Remonet was impatient to produce to the world. She hurried the sale of Carlier's effects as much as possible, selecting what she thought fit to retain, and, in five months after her nephew's death, returned to Paris with her two young wards. The best rooms of a handsome hotel were at once furnished with all the cumbrous luxury of the period, a complete staff of domestics was engaged, and a career of dissipation began. Woovers thronged about the young heiress; and among the rest came a young man named Henri St. Chaubert,

whose father, the principal notary in Metz, had been Carlier's close friend. Henri was clever and energetic, and already distinguished in the law. His pretensions were soon set at rest by Madame de Remonet, who, acting upon Angélique's vanity and ambition, persuaded her to dismiss (probably) the only lover she ever had, who cared for herself alone. Among the crowd were two, especially distinguished: the one by Madame de Remonet: the other by her niece. The first was Monsieur Tiquet, President of the Parliament of Paris, whose relations with madame had formerly been very intimate. He was old, ugly, and disagreeable. He had by extravagance impaired a large fortune, but his position upheld him. The aunt favoured his pretensions, for the president had bound himself to pay her a large sum on the day when he should marry Angélique. The girl herself inclined to a young Chevalier de Mongeorge, who was an officer in the King's Guards: handsome, witty, accomplished, and really in love, according to the fashion of the age and country. Mongeorge's family required high birth in his bride, and endeavoured to detach him from his mistress. They procured from the king his appointment to a colonelcy in a regiment ordered to a remote part of the kingdom, and, while he was gone, Monsieur Tiquet made good use of his absence. Madame de Remonet assisted efficiently. Angélique was assailed on the one side by fêtes and costly gifts; and on the other side by fabulous accounts of the wealth and rank which should be hers on becoming Madame Tiquet, and of the envy she would excite in the hearts of all the girls in Paris. Particular mention is made of one present which completely subdued the little power of resistance Angélique had left. It was a bouquet of flowers imitated from nature, the leaves being of gold and emeralds, the flowers of turquoises, rubies, sapphires, opals, and garnets, sprinkled with dewdrops of small diamonds. She could not withstand so gallant and princely an adorer, and in a few weeks became Madame Tiquet.

Passionately adoring his young wife, the president was jealous of her lightest look. As Angélique had been prepared for her married life, by an intimation from her aunt that marriage by no means excluded lovers, she insisted on dressing like a princess, and on entertaining a throng of flatterers. Her husband wished for domesticity, and had become, as spendthrifts sometimes do become, miserly, now that he had again a fortune. Constant and violent contention was the consequence, and, to make matters worse, Mongeorge, whose friends had been made happy by Angélique's marriage, was recalled to Paris, and became her satellite. Monsieur Tiquet at last refused to supply his wife with money beyond a very small allowance. She applied then to her aunt, who, by supplying her with funds, still further established empire over her, while she repeatedly urged on her how fortunate it would be were Auguste to die; for Monsieur Carlier's will had decreed that if either of his heirs died without issue, the fortune of the de-

ceased should go to the survivor. If both died childless, all was to be applied to the use of various charities, except a small sum left to Madame Remonet. Angélique ran into debt, her husband refused positively to advance or increase her allowance. Her aunt, professing to be unable to supply further demands, advised an application to Mongeorge, upon which Angélique was compelled to acknowledge that she was already his debtor for large sums, which he had heavily involved himself to procure for her. "If Auguste would only die!" was the next terrible suggestion. "He is puny and frail, does not enjoy life, and cannot live to maturity. Yet he keeps you, who so much need his money, from a vast deal of enjoyment!"

No more was said on that occasion, but at subsequent interviews the subject was revived. Auguste was a boy of thirteen, delicate and quiet, often and seriously ailing, much neglected by his aunt and sister, but loved and sedulously cared for, by an old abbé, who was his tutor. His health grew worse and worse. Violent sickness, internal cramps, and racking pains, soon brought him to the brink of the grave. In about three months from the time of the first serious attack, he died. No one suspected foul play. The boy had been almost unknown to any one except the servants and his tutor. His fortune went to Angélique; and she, some time afterwards, presented her aunt with two thousand livres and a magnificent Cashmere shawl.

Monsieur Tiquet, somewhat mollified by his wife's increase of fortune, conceded to her many of her demands, and relaxed somewhat of his vigilance. Gradually, Angélique sank so low in her morality that at last Monsieur Tiquet gave his porter, who was a Gascon named Cattelain, strict orders not to permit the egress of his mistress, unless in company with himself, or on showing a written order from him. Angélique adding this man to her list of lovers, still was free to attend revels and masquerades, until her husband, discovering the connivance, dismissed him, and himself kept the keys.

Of course Madame de Remonet was again taken into council by her pupil, and, in accordance with her advice, Angélique ceased opposition to her husband, and endeavoured to regain his confidence. As if to crown his happiness, a little girl was now born, and the consequent seclusion of the young mother gave the president reason to hope that for the future all was well. But with Angélique's returning health returned her taste for pleasure. She was very affectionate in her manner to her husband, but she now and then insisted on attending places of amusement at which he knew she must meet Mongeorge. Cattelain, although dismissed from the president's service, was still in that of the lady, who gave him money, with which he set up a sort of cabaret in a remote part of the town. To that house, as was afterwards discovered, Madame Tiquet frequently went in disguise to meet Mongeorge and others. About the same time a famous female fortune-teller was turning the heads of Paris, and drew—as the spirit-

conjuror now draws—crowds of all ranks to her séances. One day, Angélique entered the drawing-room of an acquaintance, where there was assembled a large party of both sexes, and displayed so much animation that the hostess asked if anything particularly pleasant had occurred. Her answer was afterwards brought in evidence against her.

"Yes," said she, "I have been to the fortune-teller, and she has solemnly assured me that I shall soon be perfectly happy, and freed from the great plague of my life." Of course I knew that must be Monsieur Tiquet; so I besought her to say if I should be soon a widow, as only *then* could I be perfectly happy; but she would do no more than repeat what she had said. However, the thought that he may soon die is something to live for."

At this time Monsieur Tiquet was recovering from an attack of asthma, which had for many weeks confined him to his room, where he was attended by a valet, named Servin, as old as himself, who had lived with him thirty years, and who, looking with disfavour upon his young mistress, understood more of her ways than she supposed. A certain regimen had been prescribed for the invalid, of which a strong broth, to be taken at noon, formed a portion. Suddenly Angélique, once more becoming a domestic wife, insisted on preparing this broth herself. Servin had his own views on the subject, and resolved to oppose stratagem by stratagem. On the first day of Angélique's acting as cook, the valet took a pet dog of the president's, a pretty white spaniel, and shut it into his own chamber. Taking care to be in the way at the right moment, he took the broth from her hands to carry to his master; but on his way to the sick-room visited his own, and pouring at least half the contents of the bowl on a plate, set it before the dog, and again shut him up. When he reached his master's room he found Angélique there.

"Where have you delayed?" she asked.

"I spilt some of the soup, madame, and could not appear before my master till I had changed my coat, which was splashed."

"Ah!" The cry was from Angélique, and was caused by Servin, whose foot slipped on the waxed and slippery margin beyond the carpet, so that he fell and broke the bowl. Angélique was enraged, but her anger only convinced the old man that he was right in his suspicion. Yet to his astonishment the dog did not suffer, but continued perfectly well, although he had eaten the whole portion allotted to him. The valet was therefore obliged to conclude that no poison had yet been mixed in the soup. Angélique continued to prepare it, and Servin persevered in always taking out a portion for the dog before he gave it to his master. It was excellent, and both the dog and his master appeared the better for it. So things went on for about three weeks, and then Servin, on taking the bowl from his mistress one day, fancied that he discovered a certain nervous agitation in her manner; in his hearing, too, she ordered her

footman to accompany her directly, on a visit to Madame de Remonet. Servin hastened to feed the dog, having first made sure that his mistress was gone out. He was in the act of pouring out the broth, when an angry exclamation startled him, and he saw his master standing by.

"Do you dare to give my luncheon to the dog?" he said; and made Servin precede him to his chamber, where he seated himself before the tray. As he raised the first spoonful to his lips, the faithful valet arrested his hand.

"Do not taste it, my dear master," he said; "it is poisoned."

"What do you say?"

"Your soup is poisoned."

Servin brought in the dog, and gave him all the broth. Not a word was spoken either by master or servant for more than a quarter of an hour, during which the dog, heavy with a full meal, had gone to sleep before the fire. At last it seemed disturbed, rose, whined, rolled itself on the floor writhing in convulsions, and was violently sick. In ten minutes more, the dog was dead.

There was now no doubt of Angélique's intention, but the old president implored Servin, with tears, not to betray her to justice. The man solemnly promised, on condition that his master neither ate nor drank anything but what he himself prepared and brought. It was resolved between them to conceal their knowledge of the attempt as much as possible, and to allow Angélique to believe that the broth had been taken by her husband, who would feign illness. He therefore retired to bed, and was scarcely there, when Angélique entered.

"In bed!" she exclaimed; "I hope you are not worse!"

He made no answer, but Servin, in a whisper, told her that his master had suddenly become very ill, and that perfect quiet would be necessary for him. During two days Angélique waited on her husband, who remained in bed; but, do what she would, Servin was not to be got rid of. If she desired him to fetch anything, he had it at hand in a closet, or rang for another servant, saying that the doctor had ordered him never to leave his master for an instant. On the evening of the second day, the valet had gone to the cupboard for something, and the president, fancying him still there, asked for a glass of eau sucrée. Angélique flew to a table, mixed the drink, and added to it something from a little bottle which she hastily replaced in the bosom of her dress.

The glass was suddenly taken from her hand. A half-stifed scream, betrayed her terror; but Servin, dispensing with all ceremony, led her from the room, and closing the chamber door behind them, said sternly,

"This cannot last longer, madame; you have put something by mistake into my master's eau sucrée. I must learn from the physician what it is. Two days ago you made a similar mistake with monsieur's broth; but as it was Fifine who drank it, that did not so

much matter, except that Fifine is dead, poor thing!" She did not answer, but steadying herself against the balustrade of the staircase, looked at the valet with distended eyes. "Madame sees that to preserve my master from such accidents in future, it is necessary that I should ask the physician what is here," continued Servin, touching the glass. "But it would simplify matters amazingly, if madame would be so obliging as to give me the phial which is in the folds of her dress."

"You will not betray me?"

"On one condition, madame, I will not. You must leave the care of my master altogether to me. The fatigue is too much for you, and you make nervous mistakes which might be fatal. In future, I shall make the drinks, and, further, you will give me that bottle, which I shall set carefully aside, with this glass, lest, in an unhappy moment of forgetfulness, something might occur which would render it necessary for me to produce them."

He had scarcely spoken, when she dashed the glass from his hand, and the contents, mingled with the shattered fragments, fell through the balustrades, and dropped on the staircase beneath them.

"I promise what you ask," she said, with a flash of triumph in her eyes. "The phial contains only an eye-wash."

The valet shook his head.

"You cannot come into my master's chamber again, madame; if you do——"

He paused, and returned to the president, who had seen the beginning of the affair, and who now sat up in the bed trembling with anxiety.

"Again?" he asked.

"Again; but I have explained to madame that she must come here no more." The wretched old president cast himself down on the pillow, moaning. "Calm yourself, monsieur," said the valet; "I will not say anything of this, unless it should become necessary."

The president made no reply, and Servin proceeded to arrange the room for the night: taking his own place in an arm-chair beside the bed.

The night wore on, and when the old man fell asleep at about midnight, Servin felt inclined to follow his example. Yet an undefined fear warned him to be watchful. He arose from the chair, and moved about the room, opening the curtains, and gazing out into the dark and stormy night; he stirred the fire and placed himself beside it, trimming the lamp, and taking up a book; but he could hear Angélique, whose apartment adjoined that of her husband, moving cautiously about, and he was unable to fix his attention on the pages. Presently, the sounds in her chamber ceased; nothing was to be heard save the moan of the wind without, and the crackling of the fresh wood he had piled on the hearth. He felt that the desire to sleep was overcoming him, and, casting about for means of rousing himself, it occurred to him to make some coffee. Noiselessly opening the door, he

listened for a moment at Angélique's door; all was still there; he peered through the keyhole, but there was no light within, except from the flicker of her dying fire. Feeling that all was safe, he returned to his master's chamber, and taking a light, trod carefully along the corridor, and down the staircase to the lower story, to get the articles he needed.

Scarcely had he reached the lowest step, when Angélique's door opened without a sound, and she looked over the balustrades at him: she had either been in bed, or was ready for bed, for a long white night-dress was her only covering. She entered her husband's room. Approaching the table on which his drink for the night was set, she removed the stopper from the carafe, and poured into it the whole contents of a bottle she carried. At this moment she heard Servin approaching; he was ascending the stairs, she saw the reflection from the light he carried, on the ceiling of the room. She could not regain her chamber unobserved, but remembering that she had pulled her door close as she came out, she darted towards a large closet in her husband's room, lined with fixed wardrobes, and opening the door of one of these, stepped lightly in.

She had scarcely shut the door upon herself when Servin entered the outer room, and shut himself in. She drew before her some of the garments which hung from the pegs, and cautiously settling herself into an endurable position, could hear Servin making, and drinking, his coffee. Presently Monsieur Tiquet began to mumble indistinctly, and to toss his arms and head. Anon the mutterings became incoherent sharply-uttered words; at length a fierce delirium came on. Servin took his master's hand: it was like fire to the touch. The sick man called for drink, and Servin, who had taken especial care in the preparation, hastened to give him some—but to his surprise found the stopper out of the carafe!

Now, he distinctly knew that he had replaced this stopper; a slight circumstance had impressed the fact on his mind; it had fallen from his hand upon the table, and had made a noise, which had startled his master from his first sleep.

He laid down the half-filled glass, and filled another with pure water, which the president drank eagerly. Then, going into the corridor, Servin went to Angélique's door; it was closed, but not latched, and yielded to his touch. The fire was nearly out when he looked in, but, as his eyes became used to the half-twilight, he saw that the bed coverings were turned down, and that the bed was unoccupied. He called to his mistress, supposing that she might be in the dressing-room, but when no answer was returned, he came back. He was sure that Angélique had entered her husband's chamber while he was first absent. He looked under the heavy valance of the bed, and examined every portion of the furniture, under or behind which she might be. Last of all, he went to the closet, and, as if by instinct, pulled open the leaf of the wardrobe,

and drew aside the president's robe of office, under which the guilty woman lay.

Her eyes met his, and without a word she rose and stepped from her hiding-place to the floor.

"Madame, you have broken the agreement." You cannot blame me if I now take measures to prevent any injury either to my master or myself. You must not leave this room till the physician, for whom I shall instantly send, shall have decided whether or no there be poison in the carafe the stopper of which I know was put in by me, but which I found lying on the table."

The most abject entreaties succeeded Angélique's first speechless terror, but Servin was deaf to her prayers. In the rage which quickly supervened, when she flung herself on him in her endeavours to escape, her strength was no match for his; yet the struggle was long before he at last got her into the closet, which had no window, and there locked her in.

As soon as he had done that, he proceeded to awaken one of the men-servants, and sent him for the physician. His master was alarmingly worse; his thin voice was raised in fearful screams; his whole frame was agitated by vain struggles to get up.

"Did you dare to kill my beautiful wife?" he asked.

"Lie down, monsieur. I assure you that madame is safe. She prefers to await the doctor's opinion in your wardrobe closet; she is too much agitated to come near your bed."

The president stared at him, as if trying to comprehend his words, and then, with a heavy sigh, sank back exhausted. Dawn was breaking when the doctor arrived. Having first attended to the patient, who was quiet, though still wandering in mind, he listened while Servin detailed his suspicions and the causes which had aroused them, and finally produced the carafe, filled with clear amber fluid, at the bottom of which a white sediment had settled.

By noon on the ensuing day, all Paris was in a ferment. The intelligence was in every mouth that Madame Tiquet, for an attempt upon her husband's life, was in prison and awaiting trial. The Chevalier Mongeorge, also, who had been until near midnight at the Hôtel Tiquet, was under arrest, and so was Angélique's maid. The girl had in her terror confessed all she knew, which was not a little. She declared that her mistress had frequently gone, accompanied by her, to the cabaret of Cattelain, whence she brought sometimes powders, sometimes liquids, which she told the girl were cosmetics that Cattelain's mother taught him to prepare. But the woman had watched, and had seen her mistress put portions of these things into the food of an Angora cat, and into the drinking-vessels of birds; and they had all died. On one occasion, the girl had been about to drink some soup which stood in a bowl on her mistress's table, but had only taken one or two mouthfuls, when the lady came

in, and was greatly enraged : throwing away the remaining contents of the basin. The maid was terribly ill for two days after that. At another time, Angélique had sent her to Cattelain's with a sealed letter, on receipt of which the man had delivered her a bottle which was the one now produced. It had been full when she gave it to her mistress ; now it was empty. Cattelain had said to her, " Be discreet, and you do not know what a great lady you yet may be. Some day, soon, that old fox Tiquet will die, and I shall marry madame. We shall find you a good husband with money." She had believed him to be jesting, and had laughed ; on which he had seemed angry, and told her to make haste home.

When she gave the bottle to her mistress, the latter had kissed it, and said, " I have herewith to punish all my enemies and make myself free. Have a care that you do not offend me." The girl had then asked her mistress what the phial contained ? On which she replied, " Enough to prevent half a dozen men from ever feeling a headache again. Something to cure Monsieur Tiquet's asthma and jealousy, at one draught." This had occurred five days ago. She said she had been afraid to tell, although she knew that it was poison which Cattelain had sent. On the day after the scene above described, she said to her mistress that she thought she must tell some one of what she knew, for it lay heavy on her conscience ; on which Angélique had made her swear to keep it secret : telling her that if she did not do so, she should have some of the poison herself : and that if she told, she would bring punishment on her own head, for she was now in the eyes of the law as criminal as herself. This, she said, had kept her silent. On her deposition, Cattelain was arrested. In his house were found poisons of various kinds. In one bottle, from which she said he had poured what he had given her, was a preparation of arsenic and aconite, which the physician who attended the president declared to be the same that was contained in the carafe of night drink. The girl was asked whether she believed Monsieur Mongeorge to be cognisant of Madame Tiquet's intentions ? She averred that he was not ; on the contrary, madame had told her that if Monsieur Mongeorge knew, he would cast her off, much as he loved her. As for Cattelain, he firmly denied all the accusations, and then relapsed into a dogged sullenness, from which nothing roused him.

Angélique, who quite recovered her audacity and self-possession, resisted all entreaties to confess her crime, avowing that nothing should induce her falsely to condemn herself, and cast a stigma on her child. She declared that the whole charge was a conspiracy between Servin and her maid, who had an intrigue together ; that Servin had ruled his master before marriage, was jealous of her influence, and had taken this method of getting rid of her. The torture by water was applied to her, but she bore its agony with firmness. In the same chamber, Cattelain was stretched on the rack,

and for some time bore the torture without flinching ; but as greater force was applied, he yelled, and made a full confession. He avowed that madame had promised to marry him when her husband should be dead, and that as he himself was jealous of Mongeorge, he had meant to poison that person, as soon as he could find an opportunity.

It was plain that Mongeorge, who had been arrested, was only guilty in his love for Angélique, and he was at once set free. He immediately repaired to the Hôtel Tiquet, and enforced admittance to the president, who was restored to his senses, though prostrate with shame and grief. To him, Mongeorge confessed that he loved Angélique, and swore never again to see her if her husband would aid him to endeavour to procure her pardon. The president agreed. His passion for his wicked wife was strong, and Mongeorge drew up in his presence a petition, which he signed. Then the chevalier departed to seek audience of the king, with whom he was a favourite.

It was of no avail ; the king was kind in manner, but inflexible. The crime of poisoning had fearfully increased, and he was advised most urgently, to punish the first poisoner who could be brought to justice. Moreover, Mongeorge's relatives, who were of great consideration, having learnt that the chevalier was about to intercede for Angélique, had been beforehand with him, and had besought that the law might be enforced. Pitying the young man's despair, the king again sent him from Paris, that he might not be in the way, to witness Angélique's trial and execution. Perforce, Mongeorge departed ; but, in a few days, an old man, emaciated almost to a skeleton, his hair white, his limbs tottering, and supported by a grey-haired valet, demanded audience of the king. The petitioner held by one hand a lovely little girl, and, on being presented to the king, knelt, and made his little daughter, kneeling also, join her tiny hands in supplication for her mother's life. The king raised him and embraced the child, but assured him that pardon was hopeless.

The day of trial came. The most untroubled innocence could not have displayed an eye more cloudless, a brow more unruffled, than Angélique's. Her matchless tresses were fully displayed, being arranged in clusters of heavy long curls, crowned with a chaplet of white roses. Her robe of pure white was confined at the waist by a cincture of turquoises and diamonds. Madame de Remonet, who had escaped on the first alarm of her niece's detection, had been apprehended, and Angélique knew nothing of this until she saw her aunt led into court, a prisoner like herself. Cattelain, who was carried in to give his evidence, fired when he saw the elder prisoner, and declared that it was she who had taught him to prepare the poisons, and who had counselled her niece to administer them. Sentence of death was passed on all three. The waiting-maid was pardoned in consideration of her voluntary confession, but condemned to retire for life to the convent of St.

Agathe. Cattelain managed to drag himself to the feet of his mistress and implore her pardon for having criminated her. "I forgive you, my poor Cattelain," she said; "it was pain which forced you to belie yourself and me. Let those who have compelled the false confession, answer for it to God."

Although every one was certain of Angélique's guilt, yet the sympathy excited by her strange beauty and by her fortitude, extended far and wide among all classes in France. To add to the dramatic effect of her trial, by a strange coincidence it happened that the judge who condemned her was her former lover, Henri St. Chaubert. She listened without faltering to the words of the sentence, and then looked up at him with a smile, saying loud enough to be distinctly heard by all, so awestricken was the silence in the court, "Ah! Monsieur St. Chaubert, is that you? Formerly our positions were reversed: you were the trembling culprit, I was the judge. I hear your sentence to-day with more courage than you heard mine." St. Chaubert turned ghastly white, and was obliged to lean back in his seat. For many minutes, he could not control his feelings.

Redoubled efforts were made to procure Angélique's pardon, but the king refused to receive any more petitions in her favour. Although to the last she encouraged herself with the idea of ultimate escape from her terrible doom, the day of her execution found her (as may be supposed) still under sentence of death. Dressed as she had been at her trial, and accompanied by her aunt, and Cattelain, and attended by a priest who vainly implored her to confess, she was borne on a cart through the streets of Paris, exposed to the gaze of thousands upon thousands. She bore it unmoved, and her sole anxiety seemed to be that her lovely hair should not be wetted out of curl by a slight rain that was falling. When she reached the place of execution, she said, peremptorily, to the priest:

"Cease, Monsieur l'Abbé; permit me to die in peace. Give my love to my husband and daughter. Tell Monsieur Tiquet I forgive him his share in the foul conspiracy which has brought me to this; and to the Chevalier Mongeorge give my kindest adieux, and my hair, if it *must* be cut off. So now, farewell, for I will hear no more!"

Her companions in crime suffered first. In a few minutes she, too, ceased to live. The excitement passed description. Women, and even men, shrieked and swooned; many fell and were trodden to death. The smallest lock of her hair sold for a large sum. As for the wretched president, he retired from public life, and, living a life of the utmost seclusion with his child, placed her, when sufficiently old, in a convent of the *Sacré Cœur*, where she ultimately took the veil, about a year before her father's death.

Of the poison spoken of in this true history, the worst was surely that which the honest bookseller and jeweller gave to his little child

when he first blindly suffered the foul-hearted woman who became his murderess, to drop her poisonous words into her ear.

UNDER THE SNOW.

IN TWO PORTIONS. PORTION THE SECOND.

DECEMBER 14.—We escaped with the fright; the wolves either did not suspect our presence, or were hard pressed to obtain some easier prey. At one time, we thought they were burrowing through the snow, to storm our citadel in a body; but it is not certain whether they might not be tearing to pieces some animal which they had hunted down on the spot. But when the surface of the snow is frozen hard, as it is now, it allows the wolves to travel over it rapidly. They do not, consequently, remain on the heights, where little is to be had, but they scour down the mountain and invade the plain, to seize whatever falls in their way in the outskirts of the villages. They departed as abruptly as they had arrived.

Now that the door and the window are again barricaded by a deep accumulation of snow, it is clear that the trap of the chimney is our weakest point. For the present, I dare not venture out to breathe the air; which is sad. I have no choice but to remain a close prisoner. To guard against a second attack, and at the same time to be able to light a fire without being suffocated by smoke, I have fitted an iron tube, which I found in the stable, into a circular aperture which I have cut in the trap. It is safe and convenient, but it cuts us off more than ever from the outer world.

Hitherto, my grandfather would touch neither coffee nor wine, reserving them for time of need. But our last anxieties have made him so unwell, that he has consented to try whether they will not restore his appetite and his strength. He wishes me to take my share; but I am young, and can do very well without them. A long-continued milk diet, like that to which we are now confined, is apt to disagree with persons of his age.

December 17.—"Time passes," my grandfather said to-day; "winter is approaching."

"Approaching!" I answered. "Is not winter come?"

"Not yet, according to the almanack. Winter does not begin till the twenty-first; it is still autumn; but who would believe that we are in the season of fruits?"

My grandfather has eaten scarcely anything to-day. I persuaded him to taste a little bread soaked in wine. It is evident that he makes an effort to appear more cheerful than he really feels. What should I do, were he to fall seriously ill?

December 22.—It is long since we have heard any noise outside; our seclusion is more and more complete. We conclude that a large quantity of fresh snow has fallen, and that the *chalet* is probably completely buried under the mass. Nevertheless the iron tube still rises above it; the smoke escapes freely: to-day a few

flakes of snow have fallen down through this narrow channel.

These white messengers of winter are the only things which keep up a communication between ourselves and the world. If our clock were to stop, we should lose all cognisance of time. Our only means of distinguishing night from day would be the speck of light which we can see in the morning at the top of the iron tube. On the other hand, we suffer very little from cold in our silent cave. When we have lighted the lamp, and are busy about our daily tasks before a bright fire, we partly forget our unfortunate condition. At such moments, there are even certain of our acquaintances who would envy us. Who has not often wished to be Robinson Crusoe in his desert island? And yet, he had less cause for hope than we have. It was a mere chance that some stray vessel might touch at his island, whilst we are certain that the snow will melt, sooner or later.

December 25, Christmas-day.—We devoted the day to meditation and prayer. We must be suffering under misfortunes to appreciate properly what the Saviour has done for men. Before His advent, how bitter adversity must have been! How easily it must have led to complaining and despair! The reflection is not mine, but my grandfather's.

If I am spared to descend from the mountain, I shall be able to say to my friends, "If you had known, as I have, how needful society is to every individual, you would feel towards one another no other sentiments than those of love and charity. Let us banish into temporary solitude all those who will not understand these things, and who stir up amongst us troubles and war. They will soon understand their folly; they will learn from experience that it is not good for man to be alone; they will love, as they love themselves, that neighbour without whom life would no longer be a blessing, but a chastisement of Providence."

December 28.—Yesterday, my grandfather had no appetite; but he did not complain of pain. In the evening, after supper, as he was sitting by the corner of the fire, he suddenly turned pale, tottered, and sank down. Without my assistance, he would have fallen into the fire.

I took him in my arms, and with an effort of which I did not believe myself capable, I transported him to his bed, where I first seated him and then laid him at full length. His head and his hands were cold; the blood had rushed towards the heart. I took care not to raise the patient's head, but left it low, and the blood soon flowed back to it. Consciousness returned at the same time.

"Where am I? On the bed?" said my grandfather.

"Certainly; you turned faint, and I thought it best to lay you there."

"He brought me here! Heaven be praised for it! As I become weaker, he grows stronger," he said. I knelt by the bedside for a while. At last he consented to drink a little wine, and felt the better for it.

January 1.—We have been keeping New Year's-day as well as we could; my grandfather exerted himself to cheer up my spirits. He tried to amuse me with conundrums and riddles. We feasted at supper on potatoes cooked in the ashes, toasted cheese, and toasted bread sopped in wine. The goat was not forgotten; I picked out the sweetest hay for her provender; she had a clean bed, a double ration of salt, and a triple allowance of caresses.

My grandfather wishes to add a few words in his own handwriting:

"In the name of God, Amen!

"It is possible that I may be taken from my friends, before I can acquaint them with my last wishes. I have no general directions to give respecting the disposal of my property; that duty has been performed long ago; but I wish to acknowledge the care and devotion of my dear grandson, Louis Lopraz, here present. And as it is impossible for me to make him the slightest new year's offering to-day, I beg my heirs to supply the omission by giving him, on my part, my repeater watch; my carbine; my Bible, which belonged to my father; and lastly, my steel seal, on which are engraved my initials, which are the same as those of my godson and grandson.

"I am convinced that he will value these slight tokens, for the sake of the affectionate friendship which unites us, and which death itself will not cause to cease.

"Such is my will.

"Signed at the Chalet of Anzindes, the 1st of January.

"LOUIS LOPRAZ."

January 5.—My grandfather spoke to me this morning about the state of his health without disguising anything. Every word he said is still ringing in my ears.

"My dear boy," he said, after making me sit down by his side, "I can no longer conceal from myself that the close of my life is not far distant. Whether we shall be able to keep united my soul and the portion of dust which is called my body until I can witness your deliverance, is more than I can tell; but I scarcely dare to hope it. My weakness increases with a rapidity which astonishes me; and it is to be presumed that I shall leave you to finish our sad winter quarters alone.

"You will be, I doubt not, more grieved at our separation than alarmed at your loneliness; you will feel more sorrow than fear. But I have sufficient confidence in your pious feelings and your strength of mind to be persuaded that you will not fall into a culpable degree of depression; you will think of your father, whom you will assuredly see again, and that will keep up your courage. A little reflection will convince you that, after my death, you will be exposed to no greater danger in the chalet than you were before. On the contrary, I have rather been a burden to you; you will no longer have famine staring you in the face. I strongly advise you to wait patiently. Do not expose yourself too

soon. A few days more or less are not worth reckoning in so long a captivity; and you may risk all by forestalling the favourable moment.

"My dear Louis, I am only uneasy on one account, if I must tell you so: I fear the effect of my death upon your imagination. When you behold this body deprived of life, it will strike you with a feeling of terror, perhaps of horror and disgust, which is very unreasonable, but which many people cannot overcome.

"And why should you be afraid of the remains of your aged friend? Are you afraid of me when I am asleep? The other day, when I fainted, you did not believe me capable of harming you; you saw nothing but the necessity of assisting me, and you did your duty like a courageous man. Well, then, if you should see me fall into that final swoon which is called death, behave with equal presence of mind. My body will require from you only one last service: dare to render it, when nature has warned you that the moment is come. Your strength will be quite sufficient; you gave proof of it the other evening, when you carried me and laid me upon this bed.

"You see that door; it leads to the dairy, where we never go now, because it is useless to us. You will there dig a grave as deep as you can make it, to receive my body, until you return to fetch it in the spring and give it a regular funeral in the village cemetery.

"After those sad moments, you will find this dwelling very lonely; you will shed many tears; you will perhaps call me, and I shall not answer. Do not waste your strength in useless regrets. Address your thoughts solely to Him who never fails to answer when we invoke Him with confidence."

Such were the exhortations which I received from my grandfather this morning; and, as if he felt relieved by having given them, he has since been more tranquil, more serene, and almost joyous. For my own part, I cannot believe that so clear and strong a mind can be dwelling in a body which is so near dissolution. The danger has been set before my eyes, but it still seems far distant. May God confirm my favourable anticipations!

January 7.—Darkness has a more depressing effect on sick persons than it has on people in health; although it is said to be injurious even to the robustest health. Light was made for man, and man for the light. We have contrived this morning a mode of economising our oil, without remaining completely in the dark. We have made a night-light with a thin slice of cork, through which we have thrust a very small wick. This feeble light suffices for my work, and it cheers my grandfather a little. We will make us of this for the future, and only rarely light the large lamp; for, upon trial, I find that I can manage to write with this.

January 10.—It was the will of God! . . . I am left alone with Him, far away from all the rest of the world. It happened the day before yesterday. It is impossible to go on and write

the full account of his death. The paper is soaking wet with my tears.

January 12.—Yes, this is really the twelfth of January; two days have elapsed since I wrote the preceding lines. . . My reason is returning; it shall get the upper hand, if it please God. Unless I felt that the Lord was with me and around me, I too should die, and that of fright alone.

January 13 and 14.—On the seventh, I went to bed full of hope; my grandfather appeared to be better than usual; but before I had fallen asleep, I heard him groan, and I jumped up instantly. Without waiting for him to ask me to go and help him, I dressed myself, lighted the lamp, which stood ready, and asked him how he felt.

"I feel faint," he said; "it will be like the other day; or perhaps——!" He checked himself.

"Dear grandfather, will you take a spoonful of wine?"

"No, my child; only moisten my temples and rub my hands with vinegar—and—get the Bible. Read me that passage, you know which, where I have placed a slip of paper."

I obeyed. When I had finished it, he interrupted me, made me come near him, took my hands in his, and uttered a long prayer. He pronounced the words slowly, in a feeble voice, and at considerable intervals. He then made me recite some portions of Scripture which I knew by heart; at times, he called to mind passages of the Bible and words of the Saviour, which he repeated with a fervour and resignation that melted me to tears.

I will add one trifling circumstance, which, however, affected me greatly. Blanchette, surprised, perhaps, at seeing a light shining at an unusual hour, set up a continued bleating.

"Poor Blanchette!" said the dying man; "I must caress her just once more. Let her loose, my boy, and lead her to my bedside."

I did as he desired; and Blanchette, in her familiar way, put her two fore-feet on the edge of the bedstead, begging for some little tit-bit to be given to her. We had accustomed her to take from the hand, in this way, a grain or two of salt. I thought I should be doing what was agreeable to my patient, if I laid a little salt in his hand. Blanchette took it instantly, and licked his hand afterwards.

"Always be a good nurse! Give plenty of milk!" he said, passing his arm round her neck with an effort. He then turned aside his head. I led Blanchette away and fastened her to the manger.

After that he uttered scarcely any connected words; only, he made me understand that he wished me to remain close to him, with my hand in his. I felt a slight pressure at intervals; and, as his eyes spoke to me at the same time, I comprehended that he was collecting his last strength to express his affection, and that I should be uppermost in his thoughts until life should cease.

I said a few affectionate words; at which his looks brightened up, and I saw that it would be

a pleasure to him if I continued. I therefore leaned down towards him, and said with as firm a voice as I could command,

"Adieu! adieu! Farewell, till we meet in Heaven! I am resolved to obey your injunctions faithfully. . . I believe in God the Father; I believe in the compassion and the merits of the Saviour. Do not be anxious on my account. You have prepared me so well, that I now stand in need only of God's assistance."

Here my poor grandfather squeezed my hand more forcibly, and, making an unavailing effort to answer me, he could only express his joy by a long-drawn sigh.

"I will take care to remember," I continued, "all the advice you gave for the preservation of my life. For the love of you, I will neglect nothing that can prolong my existence and help me to escape from the châlet. Farewell, dear grandfather! Farewell! farewell!"

I felt one more feeble pressure of the hand: it was the last; for his hand, which had gradually grown colder, let mine drop. He expired without effort, without convulsion, and without a sigh.

My most terrible moments, after that time, were not the first. It was when I slowly came to myself, and found myself alone in that sad habitation with—a dead body; it was then that I felt an involuntary shudder run through me, especially when night came.

In the morning, I had sufficient command over myself to wind up the clock and to milk Blanchette; the cold compelled me to light a fire: that gave me occupation: but I afterwards fell into a stupor of grief. Unfortunately, that same evening the wind rose with such violence that I could hear the wailing of its mournful gusts more plainly than I had done for some time past.

I was sitting in the chimney-corner; I was watching by the feeble glimmer of the night-light, with my back turned towards the bed: little by little, I felt a shivering fit come over me; I was no longer master of my own ideas. My mental trouble would have gone on increasing, and might have become of serious consequence, if I had not thought of a mode of putting an end to it which many people might think would make it worse. I went up to the corpse, at first constrainedly, afterwards with greater resolution. I looked at it: I dared to touch it. It was a painful effort; nevertheless I persisted. I repeated the action several times, and I felt that the shock I had suffered became by degrees more supportable.

From that time I did not cease, at short intervals, to return to the remains of my departed friend. I fulfilled with respect to them the same offices which persons accustomed to such things perform coolly. The expression of the countenance was so calm and pleasant, that it caused me to shed tears. "No," I sobbed aloud, "I am not afraid."

Nevertheless, my anguish returned when I felt that sleep was stealing over me; at my age, it is impossible to resist it. Was I to go and

lie down by the side of the body? My resolution did not carry me so far as that; and I sought, I must confess, a very wretched protection from the superstitious fears which were resuming their sway: I went and took refuge by the side of Blanchette. The warmth and the vital motion which I found in this poor animal, the slight noise she made while chewing the cud, reassured me in some slight degree.

At last I fell into a sound sleep.

The next day, as soon as I woke, I recommenced the struggle of yesterday; I employed myself as much as possible about the goat and my other work, and, above all, I frequently went near to the body. I even held that dear and venerable head for a considerable time in my hands. The more my fear diminished, the more I felt my grief increase; and I was pleased with myself on observing so reasonable and so natural a change. My thoughts then became directed to the preparations for the burial, and I recalled to mind what my grandfather had said. I believe that it was with a secret intention that he had sometimes spoken of the dangers of precipitate interments; I resolved, therefore, to wait until nature should compel me to accomplish this last duty. The lively affection which I retained for my grandfather kept me from yielding to the cowardly wish to get rid of a painful spectacle at the very earliest moment possible.

But I took my tools, and opened the dairy door.

"What a Jack-of-all-trades!" I said to myself. "First, nurse and doctor, and now gravedigger! What other bereaved relatives are spared the sight of, I am obliged to execute with my own hands!"

The first few strokes revolted me, and I was obliged to stop short. It was not that my arms refused to work, but my mind was troubled, and deprived me of the requisite energy. Every time I struck the ground, a loud echo resounded from the roof, which was vaulted with bricks, like that of a cedar. I was obliged to accustom myself to the sound, and it took me the whole day to do an amount of work which ought not to have occupied more than a couple of hours. In fact, the ground is sandy and light, and at last I was able to throw it out with the shovel without being obliged to break it up previously. I took advantage of the circumstance to dig a deep grave; for—I said to myself—if the châlet has to be left empty for any length of time (whether I escape from it, or whether it is my turn to die next), I ought to use my utmost endeavours to preserve the body from ravenous beasts. I therefore went on with my melancholy task, until I was standing in a grave as deep as I was high. The clock struck ten. Night was come, and all its black thoughts with it. But the violent exercise which I had taken soon enabled me to fall asleep. It was only deferred a few minutes by Blanchette's caresses; she seems very glad to have me with her, and never refuses to serve as my pillow.

On the 11th of January, my first thought on waking was to make an end of my painful task; when I had lighted the lamp, I felt my courage oozing away. I was obliged to have recourse to a new remedy with which I ought to have been able to dispense. Instead of breakfasting as usual on boiled milk and potatoes, I took a little bread and wine. This regimen restored a certain degree of firmness which I cannot ascribe to my own personal character, but of which I took advantage without delay. I had well considered the means of execution, and everything had been prepared the day before.

Oh, my dear grandfather, when you taught me, in front of your house, to transport a heavy body by the employment of rollers, we little thought that I should apply your lessons on so sad an occasion as this. The remembrance of what you then told me was completely refreshed in my memory. I could hear the sound of your voice, in imagination; and when the funereal burden nodded its head, as if in sign of approbation, I was so overcome that I turned my eyes away, like a person who dreads to look over the brink of a precipice.

The way was smoothed: the body was soon beside the grave. The most easy way would have been to let it fall in; but I could not make up my mind to treat it with so little reverence. Every difficulty being vanquished at last, what then remained to be done gave me but little uneasiness. I could freely give way to my grief. Seated on the mound which I had raised with my own hands, I wept abundantly by the side of that open grave. I could not resolve to throw in the first shovelfuls of earth without performing some sort of funeral service. I knelt, and searched my memory for passages of Scripture suitable to the occasion. I took the Bible, being sufficiently acquainted with it to find fitting portions, and such as my grandfather would have pointed out. While reading aloud, it appeared to me as if I had quitted my solitude. The holy volume responded to my emotion. At last I stopped, through exhaustion; I collected my thoughts, and no longer deferred what remained to be done. In a short space of time, the grave was filled. I spent the rest of the day in carving with the point of my knife the following inscription on a small tablet of maple-wood:

Here rests the body of Louis Lopraz, who died in the night of the 7th-8th of January, in the arms of his grandson Louis Lopraz, who buried him with his own hands.

I nailed the tablet to a stake, which I planted on the mound over the grave; after which I closed the door and returned to the kitchen, where Blanchette is my only company. Nevertheless, although I feel more at ease now the body is no longer lying on the bed, I find that some remains of weakness still linger in my mind. I combat them by paying frequent visits to the grave, and always without a light. I have resolved to say my prayers there night and morning.

January 15.—Yes; my position is greatly changed; I become more and more aware of it

every day. I had a friend and a companion, and yet I dared to complain! God is punishing me for my former discontent. I am left alone—all alone! This thought pursues me the whole day long.

January 16.—I cannot shake off my weakness. I left my bed in a state of languor and discouragement, which continues. I write merely for writing's sake. If I told the whole truth, this journal would now be filled with a melancholy picture of despair. I have hardly the energy to guide my pen. My first distress when we were made prisoners here, my fright when the wolves threatened to devour us, and the sad scenes of my grandfather's death and burial, were as nothing compared with the prostration of strength into which I have fallen. I had no conception of this kind of suffering. Even prayer does not help me out of it.

January 24.—Providence, to drag me out of the weariness of ennui, has sent a new source of disquietude. The goat yields a smaller quantity of milk. I thought I observed it several days ago; at present, I cannot doubt the fact.

January 25.—My grandfather certainly foresaw the possibility of my being detained here all by myself, and gave me several hints how I should act under such circumstances. One day he said, "What should we do if Blanchette were to go dry? It would be absolutely necessary to pluck up our resolution to kill her, and live on her flesh as long as we could." He followed this up with explanations how we should have to manage, to preserve her flesh. Am I to be reduced to this cruel extremity?

January 26.—If matters do not grow worse, I may set my mind at ease. Blanchette still gives enough milk for my sustenance. I have several cheeses in store. I have examined the remainder of my stock, and have spent the day in calculating how long it would last, if I had nothing else. It would not carry me through a fortnight.

January 27.—The yield of milk decreases, and the goat fattens in proportion. Consequently, in case of her milk failing, the poor creature is preparing to sustain my life with her own substance! I am now haunted by one horrid idea: shall I be driven to the necessity of turning butcher? Shall I be obliged, in order to prolong my own existence, to cut the throat of the animal which has fed me up to the present? I have now only a half ration of milk.

February 7.—I have tried every expedient. Once I got a little more milk by giving her a triple allowance of salt, which made her drink more. But it was impossible to go on so; because I shall require all my salt, if—Poor Blanchette! I have heard that hens too fat and well fed, do not lay so abundantly as lean ones; so I thought I would try the effect of giving my goat a smaller quantity of hay. But it did not answer. She yielded still less milk, and I had the vexation of hearing her bleat half the day. It is now not worth while milking her twice a day; so I have waited till the evening, in order to get a little more. But she will hardly let me

come near her. I have hurt her teat by pressing it too hard.

February 8.—I will confess my weakness; I shed tears to-day when I tried in vain to milk Blanchette for the last time. When she saw that I gave up the task, she gazed at me distrustfully, as if putting herself on her guard against a fresh attempt. I pushed the basin on one side, and sat down by the poor creature. I threw my arms round her, and wept bitterly.

She went on eating all the same, bleating occasionally, and looking at me affectionately. They say that goats do not distinguish persons, and that they never manifest the jealous and devoted attachments of dogs; nevertheless, Blanchette is fond of her companions, and shows confidence in them. She looks to me for food and the necessary attentions to which I have accustomed her; and I must now put a knife into her throat! Inexperienced as I am in such a task, I can scarcely avoid causing her great and prolonged suffering.

God has given the animals to man for food; I know it: but it is showing no ingratitude for his bounty if we become attached to those which have rendered us benefits, and which are of a gentle and affectionate disposition. I will, therefore, delay the cruel sacrifice up to the last possible moment. I have still a few victuals left, and I will economise them as closely as I can.

February 12.—With so many sorrows pressing on me, it is impossible to keep my journal with strict regularity. My provisions are all but finished; Blanchette grows fatter than ever. It goes to my heart every time I caress her. I have made a fresh search all over the house; I have broken up the floor in several places, to try and discover, if possible, some hidden store of provision. All I have gained by this violent exercise, is to excite my appetite. The idea that I have scarcely a morsel left to eat, makes me, I believe, all the hungrier.

February 17.—Since yesterday the frost has become so sharp at night, that I am obliged to keep up a constant fire. Certainly, if this weather lasted, I should have no hesitation in shutting up my poor victim's flesh in the stable, where it freezes hard, without any further preparation. But the weather may change. I must decide upon something without delay. I have only just enough salt left for my butchering purposes!

February 18.—The cold is intense; it recalls the visit of the wolves to mind. There is nothing now to hinder them from traversing the mountain in all directions. Under these desperate circumstances, it is the only end which makes me shudder. Were an avalanche permitted to crush me to-day, I should hail death as a deliverance.

February 20.—I have come to a grand resolution! I will leave the chalet to-morrow. Before risking my life, I wish to record in my journal what made me come to this conclusion.

Yesterday morning, Blanchette's bleating woke me out of a frightful dream. I thought I was standing, with bloody hands, cutting up

the poor animal's quivering flesh; her head lay before me; I could nevertheless hear it utter cries of pain. These were what actually did strike my ear. I awoke with my cheeks streaming with tears. How delighted I was to behold Blanchette still living! I ran up to her; she was more affectionate than ever. My joy was not of long duration. I remembered that destitution stared me in the face; indecision was impossible. I took a knife, and set to work to sharpen it on the hearthstone. I was at my wits' end; I felt as if I were going to commit a murder; and, after advancing unsteadily for the purpose of giving the fatal blow, I stopped short, overpowered by feelings of remorse.

My hands were benumbed with cold, another reason for deferring the act which inspired me with such disgust and repugnance. I lighted a good fire, and pondered as I warmed myself. "If the wolves can travel over the snow," it suddenly struck me, "why should not we travel over it as well?"

This idea thrilled me with joy; then fear stole over my mind. I was about to surrender myself to those ravenous brutes. To avoid making Blanchette my prey, I was exposing myself to become the prey of wolves!

And, if I kill the goat—I afterwards considered—am I sure that her flesh will suffice for my support until the moment of deliverance? I have sometimes seen the Jura all covered with white quite into the summer. I must not lose the opportunity now offered while the snow is frozen. That the wolves will attack us during our course, is far from a certainty; for, if I start, our pace will be rapid; we will descend in a sledge!

I sprang to my feet instantly; my resolution was taken, and, from that moment, I laboured at its execution. In a short space of time, I had roughly put together the vehicle necessary for our journey, employing the very best wood which remained. I gave to the supports of the sledge a considerable width, to prevent their sinking in the snow. I intend fastening the goat behind, and tying her feet, so as to hinder her from struggling, and propose to place myself in front. Accustomed in my childish sports to guide a sledge down steep slopes, I hope, if no accident occurs, speedily to reach the plain.

Meanwhile, I am about to lie down to rest, although the excitement will hardly allow me to sleep. I cannot gaze without emotion on the walls of this prison where I have suffered so much, and where I shall leave my grandfather's remains. I think with terror of the distance which lies between me and the village; but I will not draw back. The thought of being soon certain respecting my father's fate renders me incredibly impatient. The sledge is ready. Here is the rope with which I will tie Blanchette's feet; here is the sheaf of straw which is to serve her for bed and shelter; here is the blanket which I will wrap around me; and, lastly, here is the Bible. I will never part with it more; it shall accompany me unto life or unto death.

In the last scene of my captivity, things passed quite differently to what I had expected.

On the 21st of February, the cold struck me as increasing in severity; I therefore determined not to lose an instant. I had to open a passage wide enough for the sledge to pass through; but I could throw back the snow into the chalet, and that made my task easier. I immediately set to work, and laboured at it so heartily, that at last I felt tired. I was obliged to rest awhile. I lighted a fire.

Scarcely had the smoke risen in the air, when I heard a great noise outside. My first thought was that the wolves had got scent of me, and that they were on the point of devouring me. I violently shut to the door. My fright did not last long, for I soon heard myself distinctly called by name, and I even thought I could recognise the voice. I answered with all my strength.

Instantly there arose, in the direction of the door, a confused sound of voices, like that of people excited by their work in hand. In a few minutes, a tolerably wide opening completed the passage which I had begun. It was my father. He scarcely waited for the breach in the snow to be fairly open. He darted with a cry into the chalet. I was in his arms.

"And your grandfather?" he asked.

I was too much overcome to answer: I led him into the dairy. He knelt beside the grave; I did the same; and, as I endeavoured to tell him in detail what had passed, he saw, by my agitation, that the attempt was beyond my strength.

The men who accompanied him had entered. They were my two uncles, and Pierre, our servant. They all embraced me. They saw my preparations, and approved of them. They decided to start immediately. My liberators had fastened to their feet small pieces of board armed with little points. They had brought a couple of pairs besides. Ah! one of them was useless; I put on the other. Pierre took charge of the sledge. The wolves now might come if they pleased; we were all armed. My father took me by the hand, and laid on my shoulder a light gun which I knew how to use.

"This is not the time," he said, "to remove my father's mortal remains. We will come and fetch them as soon as the season allows us, when they shall decently receive the last respect due to them, in the village cemetery."

"You have divined," I replied, "my grandfather's last wishes."

We retired for an instant into the dairy; my uncles were with us. After a few moments of silence, my father, all in tears, exclaimed,

"Adieu! father. No doubt I am doing what you would request me to do, in removing this lad as soon as possible, whose fate must have caused you as much apprehension as it has given us. Father, adieu!"

We departed; our eyes were full of tears. The descent was rapid but fatiguing. I was

especially dazzled by the light of the sun and the brilliancy of the snow. The cold was severe, and I did not complain; it was what had saved me.

After travelling over the snow with no other accident than sinking in a little from time to time, we arrived at the spot, still a long way from the village, up to which they had opened the road in their endeavours to reach us. I was astonished to see the immense labour it must have cost; and I comprehended that, without the frost, a long time must still have elapsed before I could be delivered.

"You would have been rescued in the month of December, if the frost had held on," my father said; "but the snow softened, and we had no choice but to work as hard as we could at this undertaking. You must know, my dear Louis, that our neighbours have been wanting neither in charity nor zeal; but, within the memory of man, never was there such a heavy fall of snow. Four times did we open the road, and four times was it drifted up again."

"Was it blocked up from the first day?" I inquired.

My father then informed me of a very unfortunate circumstance. He nearly lost his life from the sliding of a mass of snow, as he was descending the mountain. They picked him up in a dying state at the edge of a ravine, and, a few paces further on, they found my grandfather's stick, and my bottle.

My father was carried home senseless, where he continued for three days in a precarious condition. They lost all that time in searching for us amongst the snow at the bottom of the ravine. When my father came to himself, it was too late to make any attempt in our favour, which would already have been very dangerous, if not impossible, after the first day.

All our neighbours came out to meet me, testifying their friendly disposition; and I blushed to have ever doubted it. Everybody is curious to see Blanchette. She is overwhelmed with caresses on my account. She is treated to the best hay and the dryest litter; she will be the most pampered and the happiest of goats.

God has saved my life. He has not permitted my grandfather to behold his family again. But the good friend whom I have lost, taught me never to murmur at the decrees of Providence.

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